University of Chester

The management of continuing professional development in General Further Education Colleges when intentionally aiming to improve Ofsted inspection from an ‘inadequate’ or ‘requires improvement’ grading to ‘good’.

‘Thesis submitted in accordance with the requirements of

the University of Chester for the degree of

Doctor of Business Administration

by Wilfrid Flanda.’

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ABSTRACT

The area of teachers' continuing professional development (CPD) is in the spotlight. This study considers the range of CPD opportunities that are implemented for teachers in General Further Education Colleges (GFECs) following an "inadequate" or "requires improvement" Ofsted inspection in order to achieve a future grading of "good". The study draws on specific theoretical insights from the literature concerned with teacher professional development in the Further Education (FE) sector. In doing so, the study evaluates the spectrum of CPD models that were on offer within eleven GFECs that took part in the study by using a constant comparative approach. Using data generated from the eleven GFECs and also Kennedy's (2014b) framework of CPD models as a lens for analysis, I identified five CPD models, which I then classified in relation to their *top-down* or *developmental* approach, and also the extent to which the activities identified underpinned professional autonomy and transformative practice. Using CPD as the point of analysis, the study investigates eleven GFECs, and whether the approach taken by the various colleges, prioritises individual or collective development. It then goes on to examine the contribution of resources, roles and responsibilities of individuals and teams within the particular context in which they operated. The findings generated from this study argue that continuous improvement is the result of a change in culture that is initiated by the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) and middle managers, and the success of this cultural change hinges on a series of mechanisms that support the achievement of "higher standards" in teaching and learning.

DECLARATION

"The material being presented for examination is my own work and has not been submitted for an award of this or another HEI except in minor particulars which are explicitly noted in the body of the thesis. Where research pertaining to the thesis was undertaken collaboratively, the nature and extent of my individual contribution has been made explicit."

Name: Wilfrid Flanda Signature: Date: 31/08/2018

DEDICATION

To my children Emilie and Bobby

To my nieces Axelle, Marion, Aude, Allyah, Jade, Naima, and Sabrina

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Abstract……2
Declaration……3
Dedication……4
Acknowledgments……5
List of Abbreviations……9
List of Figures……12
List of Tables……...13
List of Appendices……...14
Portfolio abstract……15
Chapter One
Background ……18
Role of the Further Education (FE) college sector……..19
Performance of the Further Education (FE) college sector……20
Qualification attainment……..20
Quality in teaching, learning, and assessment (TLA)……21
Image of the FE college sector……22
Reform overload and state-led regulation……...24
Outcomes resulting from the Government's reform of FE colleges……...27
Contested nature of the Government's reform on colleges and teachers……29
Rationale for the study.....30
The methodology and methods employed……...30
Aim of the study…….....32
Scope of the study……...33
Contribution to knowledge and practice…….....34
Structure of the thesis…….....35

Chapter Two: Literature review
Changing paradigms: managerialism and performativity……...37
Impact of managerialism and government policy on teachers' agency……..38
Impact of performativity and government policy on colleges……39
Impact of managerialism and performativity on quality and quality enhancement……40
CPD in General Further Education Colleges (GFEC) in England……..42
CPD practices in GFECs……44
Perceived barriers……46
Shifting discourses of teacher education and professional development……48

Towards an analysis of models of CPD……..50

Chapter Three Methodology

Aim of the Study…….56
Research methodology……57
Research philosophy……57
Epistemological considerations……...58
Ontological considerations……..59
Research approach……...60
Strategies of inquiry……61
Research design……...62
Case study design……62
Rigour of qualitative research: trustworthiness……...63
Data collection…….64
Methods of data collection……..67
Participants……..68
Data Analysis……..69
Ethical considerations…….70

Chapter Four: Data analysis and discussion

Categories and codes……...72
Discussion – CPD tools for improving teaching and learning……75
College-wide CPD: staff learning development (SLD) days in colleges……75
Staff learning development days within industry……77
Online training…….78
Teaching and Assessor qualifications…….79
Maths and English qualification (level 2)……...81
Microsoft Certified Educator qualification…….81
Lesson observation……..83
Non-graded lesson observation……...86
Excellence programme……91
Coaching……..91

Chapter Five: Conclusions and recommendations

Analyses of the five CPD models: a transmissive or transformative model?.....101
Does CPD prioritise individual or collective development?.....102
Contribution of resources, roles and responsibilities in delivering CPD activities……...102

Formulating a framework to analyse CPD activities……103
Reflections on the implications for practice……104
Recommendations for practice……105
Limitations of the research……...105
Potential for future research……106
Reflections on research journey……...108
List of references……..110

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AoC Association of Colleges

APs Advanced Practitioners

ATLS Associate Teacher Learning and Skills

BIS Department for Business, Innovation and Skills

CIF Common Inspection Framework

CIPD Chartered Institute of Personal Development

CPD Continuing Professional Development

CTLLS Certificate in Teaching in the Lifelong Learning Sector

DBA Doctor of Business Administration

DfE Department for Education

DfEE Department for Education and Employment

DTLLS Diploma in Teaching in the Lifelong Learning Sector

EFA Education Funding Agency

ESRC Economic and Social Research Council

ESFA Education and Skills Funding Agency

ETF (The) Education & Training Foundation

ERA Education reform Act

FE Further Education

FECs Further Education Colleges

FEFC Further Education Funding Council (for England)

FENTO Further Education National Training Organisation

FHEA Further and Higher Education Act

FTE Full-time equivalent

GCSE General Certificate of Secondary Education

GFEC(s) General Further Education College(s)

GOV Government

HE Higher Education

HND Higher National Diploma

IES Institute for Employment Studies

IfL Institute for Learning

IFS Institute for Fiscal Studies

ISR Individual Student Records

ICT Information and communication technology

IT Information Technology

ITE Initial Teacher Education

ISPs Independent Specialist Providers

ISRs Individual Student Records

KPIs Key Performance Indicators

LEA(s) Local Education Authoritie(s)

LLUK Lifelong Learning UK

MBA Master of Business Administration (degree)

MCE Microsoft Certified Educator

MIS Management Information System

NAO National Audit Office

NEET Not in Education, Employment or Training

OFSTED Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills

PCDL Providers of Personal and Community Development Learning

PPVs Professional Practice Visits

PRD Performance Review and Development

PTLLS Preparing to Teach in the Lifelong Learning Sector

QCF Qualifications and Credit Framework

QTLS Qualified Teacher Learning and Skills

RPA Raising the Participation Age

SET The Society for Education and Training

SFA Skills Funding Agency (SFA)

SIR Staff Individualised Record

SLCs Subject Learning Coaches

SLD Staff Learning Development (Days)

SLT Senior Leadership Team

SMART Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic, Timely

STEM Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics

TAQA Training, Assessment and Quality Assurance

TES Times Educational Supplement

TLA Teaching, learning and Assessment

UfI University for Industry

UK United Kingdom

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1: Further education and skills providers judged good or outstanding for overall effectiveness at their most recent inspection between 2010 and 2014 (England) (Ofsted 2014/15)……...22

Figure 2: College mergers 1993 to 2018 (AoC, n. d.)…….28

Figure3: Continuous improvement through graded lesson observation and training plan……...85

Figure 4: Conceptual underpinning of quality and quality improvement of teaching and learning through lesson observation……....96

Figure 5: Configuration of the teacher CPD in GFECs when intentionally aiming to improve Ofsted inspection from an 'inadequate' or requires improvement grading to 'good'……...97

Figure 6: Management of teacher CPD in GFECs when intentionally aiming to improve Ofsted inspection from an 'inadequate' or requires improvement grading to 'good'……...98

Figure 7: Contribution of CPD towards teacher professional autonomy when intentionally aiming to improve Ofsted inspection from an 'inadequate' or requires improvement grading to 'good'...……99

Figure 8: Contribution to practice…….104

Figure 9: Suggestion for future research……...107

Chart 1: College income actuals and forecast (AoC 2014)…….26

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1: Summary of College numbers based on AoC (2016)……..19

Table 2: CPD practices in GFECs …….....45

Table 3: Typologies of CPD models……..52

Table 4: Role of participants and pseudonyms……...66

Table 5: Mapping of the categories and codes against the research objectives…….74

Table 6: Summary of CPD activities in GFECs when intentionally aiming to improve Ofsted inspection from an 'inadequate' or require improvement grading to 'good'……...95

LIST OF APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Participation information document……131

Appendix 2: Participant consent form …….133

Appendix 3: Interview guide and mapping with research objectives……134

Appendix 4: Stage 1 list of categories and codes……...136

Appendix 5: Transcript…….145

Portfolio Abstract

The Doctorate of Business Administration (DBA) is a professional doctoral degree designed to develop knowledge and theory; it is focussed on having an impact on professional practice through the application of theory and research into complex issues in leadership and management. As I previously studied for an MBA, I was exempt from the "M Level" modules and started the DBA programme with the "D Level" modules.

To begin with, I studied the module *Action Learning* (BU8002) that took place over three semesters. In the first semester, the module was led by Professor Caroline Rowland and had a heavy focus on topical international issues. These included the *Renault – Nissan* case that focussed on "creating value across cultures." This module encouraged me to use my critical thinking skills and helped me to examine the factors that might influence why strategic alliances fail: it also emphasised the importance of *Hofstede* cultural dimensions in international business strategy.

More opportunities for critical thinking followed in the second semester with Professor Peter Stokes. In examining a glossary of terms used within *Critical Management Studies* (CMS) writing, I developed useful insights in to how glossary terms are interpreted and how development of these insights, made me reconsider my "taken-for-granted" notions of commonly accepted definitions of such terms. For instance, Professor Stokes (2011) stated in his glossary that: "*A bricoleur is an agent (see agency) of bricolage and is in essence a DIY enthusiast*." Through many interesting and challenging debates with Professor Stokes, I began to consider whether academia, and in particular research, exemplifies the concept of *bricolage*. The glossary of terms was also helpful in delineating other commonly used concepts in the field such as *managerialism, performativity,* and *social constructionism* which later became of relevance to my own study. Throughout the course of my study, I have analysed and discussed the meanings, issues, and implications of each of these terms. Using examples taken from the literature, I have examined how a better understanding of such terms might assist managers in General Further Education Colleges (GFECs) address work situations related to teachers' continuous professional development (CPD.)

It would also be fair to say that Professor Stokes was a key contributor to my "eureka" moment when he introduced me to the concept of *rhizome* (rhizomatic knowledge) as explained by Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari in their 1976 work. The rhizome provides a metaphorical representation of knowledge which is non-linear and non-hierarchical: an

important concept in the field of learning, it was unfortunate I could not take this concept forward into my own study.

In the third semester (second academic year), the module *Action Learning* helped me think about possible research topics, and ultimately construct a literature review summary table. The purpose of the literature review and summary table was to help me evaluate a range of views on my chosen topic and to understand how these views impacted on the topic of management: on completion of this stage, I wrote a draft literature review for my topic of interest. The principal learning objective during this semester was to develop my understanding of the topic and hone my critical thinking skills through a critical examination of the relevant literature and to utilise this learning to inform my research. In surveying the available literature, my proposal evolved and eventually settled on investigating the range of formal learning practices employed in GFECs (professional development programmes) along with a range of informal experiences, which enable individuals to become competent teachers in the workplace.

The fourth semester ended the two-year period of the taught element of the DBA programme and focused on *Research Methods* (BU8001). In addition to reviewing the core concepts related to business research methods, the module culminated in the formulation of a detailed proposal for my research project. Inspired by the work of Billet (2001) on workplace learning, particularly his notions of *workplace affordances* and *individual engagement*, my research proposal sought to explore how managers in the further education sector, tailor workplace learning curriculum to particular college needs.

The completion of the taught element of the DBA programme marked my progression to the thesis stage and was an important point on the learning programme. Over a two-year period, I worked towards the completion of the module *Major Research Project* (BU8003) which was assessed through a written thesis and a viva voce examination. The proposal I eventually submitted in the fourth semester, was a further elaborated upon my earlier drafts and in it, I identified teacher *continuing professional development* (CPD) as a key topic.

A key learning outcome from undertaking research at level eight has been the importance of understanding the need to set the study within the context of the further education sector, and particularly the need to evaluate the challenges arising in relation to the concept of quality, and quality improvement, in teaching and learning in General Further Education Colleges (GFECs). Through developing my critical thinking skills and using these newly acquired skills throughout the research process, I have been able to arrive at new understandings and acquire knowledge and abilities, for appraising how different bodies of literature position themselves according to their own lens. Ultimately, the research objectives

have helped me set the boundaries of my study, select and then critically analyse relevant bodies of literature.

Chapter one

Introduction

The chapter begins with a brief examination of the contextual background in which General Further Education Colleges (GFECs) evolved in England, and what this means for teacher continuing professional development (CPD). The chapter moves on to examine the rationale for the study, the methodology, and the aim. In the final section, I explore in detail the scope of the study and examine the contribution to knowledge and practice achieved through this research: the chapter concludes with an outline of the study.

Background

The Further Education (FE) college sector in England belongs to the Skills System (Skills Commission n.d.) and lies within post-compulsory education and comprises any study after secondary education but not including Higher Education (GOV.UK, 2016). Many organisations make up this sector including:

- General Further Education colleges
- Sixth Form Colleges
- Agricultural Colleges
- Specialist Designated Institutions
- Art, Design and Performing Arts (Lambert, 2014; p. 4).

Within the sector, learners benefit from a large choice of courses extending from basic English and maths to Higher National Diplomas (HNDs). In August 2018, the Association of Colleges (AoC) confirmed there are a total of 312 colleges in the United Kingdom of which 266 are in England (AoC, 2018). Table one summarises the number of GFECs in 2018

Colleges in the UK	312
Colleges in England	266
General further education colleges	179
Sixth Form Colleges	61
Land-based Colleges	14
Art, Design and Performing Arts Colleges	2
Specialist Designated Colleges	10
Colleges in Scotland	26
Colleges in Wales	14
Colleges in Northern Ireland	6

Table 1: Summary of college numbers (AoC, 2018)

Role of the Further Education (FE) college sector

The Further Education college sector is beset with paradoxes starting with such fundamentals as what is its purpose. In 1997, Kennedy (p. 5) depicted the English FE sector as being: "what is not school and not university". However, Green (2012) recognises the centrality of the FE sector and points to the role it plays in supporting local communities and economies. It can be argued that the importance of the sector hinges on three distinct strands.

First, the sector fulfils a role in terms of widening participation (Orr, 2008; Lambert, 2014; Select Committee on Social Mobility, 2016) because learners from lower socio-economic groups are more likely to go into FE than others in their age group (Select Committee on Social Mobility, 2016). The imbalance in the number of learners with low academic attainment entering FE has been outlined recently by the Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted, 2015) who said: "More learners without GCSE grades A* to C in English and mathematics go on to attend general FE colleges than to other types of provider" (Ofsted, 2015). These are learners whose backgrounds might be classified as "non-traditional" and are given a second chance in life (Ravenhall, 2014). However, this view assumes the only curriculum on offer is "tradition" curriculum and negates the issue of vocational curriculum which generally cannot be delivered in mainstream schools.

Second, the FE sector fulfils an economic role (Leitch Review, 2006; Select Committee on Social Mobility, 2016; Ofsted 2014/15; Nash & Jones, 2015). In the Annual Report for the

period 2014/15, Ofsted Chief Inspector acknowledges the positive contribution GFECs make towards improving the economic prospects of learners from underprivileged backgrounds who enrol on FE courses. The economic argument is also supported by the Select Committee on Social Mobility (2016) which suggested there are strong economic returns for most FE qualifications, particularly at Level 3.

Third, research has found FE colleges play an important role in driving social mobility (Department for Business, Innovation and Skills [BIS], 2014; BIS 2014; Social Mobility and Child Poverty Commission, 2014). In its report *State of the Nation* (2016, p. iii) the Social Mobility Commission acknowledges: "Britain has a deep social mobility problem" and recognises the current "unfair education system" as constituting one of the four identified fundamental barriers to social mobility. In her speech *Education at the core of social mobility* delivered on 18 January 2017, Justine Greening, the then Education Secretary set out the role the FE sector would play "in driving social mobility and helping plug the productivity gap [that Britain] is facing''.

Performance of the Further Education (FE) college sector

Despite evidence indicating the important role and positive contribution the FE college sector in England makes - at least socially and economically - key findings from the literature still point to the perceived state of underperformance in the sector, particularly in relation to qualification attainment and to the quality of teaching, learning, and assessment (TLA).

Qualification attainment

The Leitch Review of Skills (2006, p. 2) set out a number of objectives intended to enable the United Kingdom to become a world leader in skills by 2020. In particular, the report points to the importance of achieving basic skills in literacy and numeracy, as well as striving for attainment at Level 2. The review also recommends shifting the balance of intermediate skills from Level 2 to Level 3 with a view to improving the quality, image, and number of intermediate skills. But recent research suggests FE colleges are not contributing enough towards the objectives set out in the Leitch Review and that GFECs continue to make provision for courses at Level 2 or below (Ofsted, 2014/15). There is also evidence that FE colleges are unable to achieve strong outcomes even in vocational qualifications. The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, *Children's Services and Skills* (2014/15) has commented that: ''GFECs deliver the most vocational qualifications but still have the lowest average point scores in this area'' (Ofsted, 2014/15, p. 51).

In its 2015/16 annual report, Ofsted acknowledged that learners from low-income backgrounds often have additional needs, and had previously recommended that FE colleges implement better processes to ensure the most disadvantaged young people continue to engage in education and training (Ofsted, 2014/15). It also drew attention to the fact that too many young people from disadvantaged backgrounds fail to achieve well in their post-16 setting and do not complete their courses.

In light of this debate, the Wolf Report (2011, p. 10) made five recommendations linked to employability for today's vocational education system that includes achieving good levels of English and mathematics which: "(…) are rewarded directly by the labour market throughout people's careers".

Quality in teaching, learning, and assessment (TLA)

Improving teaching, learning, and assessment (TLA) in the FE sector was the subject of considerable concern in 2011 when a series of inspections and audits uncovered poor performance that led to questions about whether the sector was fit for purpose (Ofsted, 2014/15, p. 59). There was also concern about efforts aimed at raising standards in a sector that was said to have slowed down and, particularly in GFECs, revealed a decline in quality that exposed deep underlying weaknesses (Ofsted, 2014/15, p. 59).

Figure one (page 19) shows a two per cent decline in the overall number of "good" or "outstanding" GFECs across England between 2014 and 2015. In their account of this trend, Ofsted explains the decline is due to a third of the GFECs audited between 2014 and 2015 dropping at least one grade, whilst the remaining GFECs that were inspected, did not improve from their previous Ofsted grade of "requires improvement" or "inadequate" (Ofsted, 2014/15). From September 2015 quality inspections have been carried out under the new "Common inspection framework: education, skills and early years" (CIF) (Ofsted, 2015) which has been revised and in use from September 2018 (Ofsted, 2016).

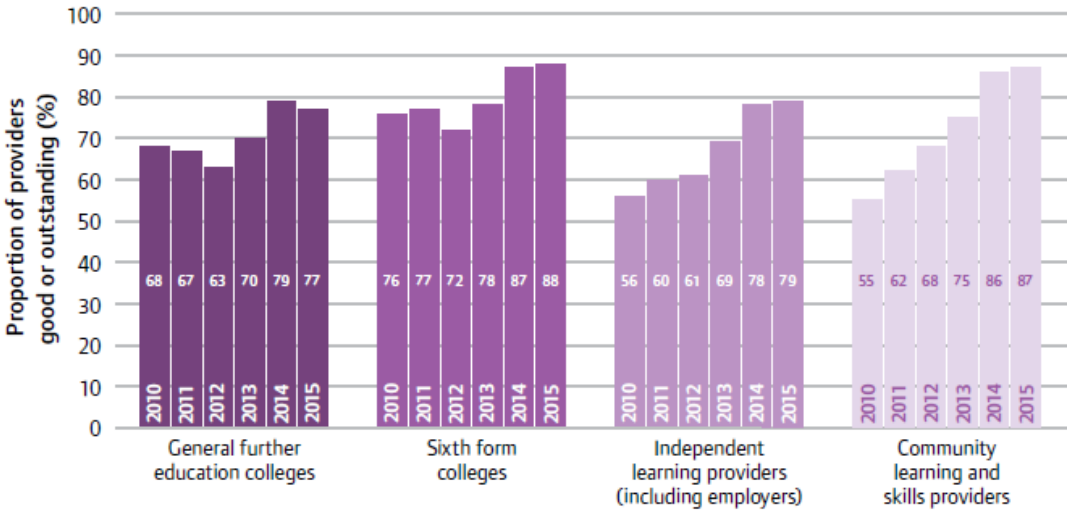


Figure 1: FE and skills providers judged "good" or "outstanding" following their most recent inspection (2010 to 2014) in England (Ofsted, 2014/15).

Recent figures from the AoC (2018) suggest poor performance is a continuing feature of FE colleges since only 72 per cent were judged good or outstanding in terms of their overall effectiveness at their most recent Ofsted inspection. The results imply that around a third (28%) of colleges inspected during this period did not meet the necessary inspection criteria. Poorly performing GFECs are having an impact on learners, with the *Social Mobility and Child Poverty Commission* cautioning against underperformance in the sector as drastically hampering efforts aimed at driving social mobility. According to the Commission: "Four inadequate Further Education Colleges alone are failing more than 40,000 pupils. For vocational reforms to positively impact social mobility, a step change in quality is needed'' (Social Mobility and Child Poverty Commission 2014, p. 125). While it may not be possible to confirm a correlation between poor outcomes for recently inspected GFECs and changes in the inspection regime, it is nonetheless reasonable to note these changes.

Image of the FE college sector

The problematic status of the FE college sector is neatly encapsulated in comments made by the *Social Mobility and Child Poverty Commission* (2014, p. 130) that noted the sector: ''is too often low priority, low-status and low-quality [and that] vocational education does not yet command the confidence of employers, learners and parents''. The Wolf Report (2011) also outlines significant caveats relating to vocational education and that vocational education in England does not necessarily constitute a means for gaining access to employment or entry into higher education. As such there are: ''at least 350,000 [young people

who] get little to no benefit from the post-16 education system'' (BIS, and DfE [DfE], 2011, p. 1).

Evidence presented by the Wolf Report (2011) suggests there are two main strands underlying the negative perception of vocational education in England. The first of these strands suggest there is a dis-connect between qualifications and the labour market with significant numbers of learners enrolling on qualification courses that subsequently fail to translate into employment. The Department for Business, Innovation and Skills, and the DfE (2011, p. 45) claim there has been: ''a significant and marked decline, over the last 25 years, in the average returns to post-16 vocational education for those who move from it straight into the labour market''. The issue of qualifications appears to be key when considering progression between levels with the Wolf Report (2011, p. 44) arguing that: ''Young people [are] encouraged to take qualifications at age 14-16 which will block their progression to many valuable post-16 options, and for reasons which have nothing to do with the pupils own best interests''. As a result, the vocational education sphere experiences significant levels of dropout and ''churning'' (BIS, and DfE, 2011, p. 44).

These findings reinforce those of Swift and Fisher (2012) who investigated career and occupational choices amongst a sample of 197 students taken from two non-selective comprehensive schools and two FE colleges. The findings revealed that vocational studies are seen: "As the second best option in response to their academic under-achievement" (Swift & Fisher, 2012, p. 219). The overall picture shows formal qualifications command a better social status and are seen as the best choice in terms of employability. More worryingly, the study concludes that these learners showed: "Negative dispositions towards vocational education and training, and envisioned themselves as heading towards a job that anyone could do" (Swift & Fisher, 2012, p. 219).

However, arguments relating to negative perceptions about vocational education in England are not limited to issues of qualification. What is also concerning is that increasing levels of political involvement in vocational education, especially 14-19 year old education in England, has exacerbated the dissonance between qualifications, the labour market, and progression into further studies (BIS, and DfE, 2011, p. 21). For example, funding priorities along with performance management systems are mitigating forces against the level of support offered to learners, especially those post-16 without the essential maths and English requirements (BIS, and DfE, 2011, p. 45).

Despite the many challenges facing FE colleges in England, the positive contribution the sector makes has also been acknowledged. In particular, it has been noted that GFECs support an agenda, outside of teaching and learning, which includes socio-economic

objectives. However, it is nonetheless true that the sector is beset with paradoxes and achievements in the sector are undermined by a series of weaknesses related to GFECs overall effectiveness and image. In particular, debates relating to qualification attainment, quality of teaching, and lack of opportunities for progression towards employment, higher education or even between levels (QCF) beset the sector. This helps reinforce the fundamental idea that the potential of the vocational education sector, and more specifically GFECs in England, is not fully achieved (BIS, and DfE, 2011). In addition to the issues concerning performance, it is also argued increasing political involvement in educational policy is a further contributing factor to the state of underperformance that is characterised by reform overload and state-led regulation. It is this changing landscape, as it besets the FE sector, which will be critically examined in the next section.

Reform overload and state-led regulation

A review of the literature depicts overwhelming agreement that government policy plays a vital role in driving the change agenda that is taking place within the FE college sector in England (Coffield & Williamson, 2011; Coffield, 2014; BIS, and DfE, 2011; Simkins & Lumby, 2006). Hannagan, Lawton and Mallory (2007) contend that since the 1980s, there have been ongoing and deep changes in the management of FE colleges in England. In particular, the authors point to the importance of the 1980s as the era in which FE colleges were exposed for the first time to market forces such as competition, a cost-driven approach, and funding criteria linked to SMART objectives and time-bound strategic plans.

Following the enactment of the Education Reform Act (1988) FE colleges were put under the umbrella of the Local Education Authorities (LEAs) which meant local authorities lost control over finance and staffing (Hannagan et al., 2007). Alongside these changes, the Further and Higher Education Act (1992) that followed, accelerated the metamorphosis of FE colleges into more: 'Independent corporations, limited by guarantee, with charitable status and with responsibility for their own management" (Hannagan et al., 2007, p. 485). As a result of these transformational changes, FE colleges have achieved self-governing status for more than twenty years now (AoC, 2014).

The colleges new found autonomy - from being local authority managed to one of institutional autonomy - took place within a context that was centred on increased demand for education, alongside a reduction in public spending (Simkins & Lumby, 2006). To accompany these changes the establishment of the Further Education Funding Council (FEFC) can be seen as having a twofold ambition that included government expansion of the FE sector while at the same time achieving minimum costs and encouraging ‘‘institutional efficiency’’ (FEFC as cited in Simkins & Lumby, 2006). Indeed, the government recommended that: ‘‘The Council

should strike a balance between securing maximum access to the widest possible range of opportunities in further education and avoiding a disproportionate charge on public funds'' (FEFC as cited in Simkins & Lumby, 2006, p. 11).

These reforms pivoted around three political strands: The first is the political intent to implement quality assurance systems focused on consistently meeting various stakeholders' needs, and the integration of an outcomes-based component in the funding allocation model (Simkins & Lumby, 2006). The second political aim emphasised the role of the FE sector within the context of the skills-driven agenda which acknowledges the extent to which Britain faces severe skills shortages (Coffield & Williamson, 2011; Greening, 2017). The government's aim of ensuring the sector delivers the skills needed to improve the competitiveness of Britain is not new and was the result of a need for: "High quality further education […] at the heart of our skills strategy" (BIS, 2010; p. 12). Lambert (2014) investigating the challenges faced by leadership and management teams in FE colleges, suggested globalisation informs national policy, which in turn affects strategic decisions at college level. In doing so, Lambert (2014, p. 10) argues economic factors are most likely to influence "political thinking". This view is also supported by Simkins and Lumby (2006) who contend the educational system is seen as the vehicle to deliver the skills needed within the context of globalisation.

The third political strand is that of the government seeking to reduce public spending and the budget deficit which has been a focus of successive governments since 2009. According to the Association of Colleges (2014) these measures have particularly focussed on post-16 education (specifically 16 to 18-year-olds). Statistics on education and training in the UK from the Department of Education show that total (central government and local authority) expenditure on education in 2012-2013 was estimated at £86.6 billion (DfE, 2013), and £83.4 billion in 2015-16 (DfE, 2016), a reduction in real terms of 9.6 per cent compared to 2012/13. A House of Commons Library briefing paper by Foster (2018, p. 19) summarises the 16-19 education expenditure since 2010-11 and concludes "(…) total expenditure [excluding expenditure on the Education Maintenance Allowance] fell from £6.39 billion in 2010-11 to £5.79 billion in 2016-17, a reduction of 9.3 per cent in cash terms and 17.5 per cent in real terms". Data from the Institute for Fiscal Studies (IFS) estimates that:

> (…) in 2016-17 prices: Spending per full time 16-19 student in further education (e.g. sixth form colleges and general FE colleges) fell from a high of £6,046 in 2010-11 to £5,639 in 2015-16. Expenditure per student in 1989-90 was estimated to be £5,190 in 2016-17 prices (as cited in Foster, 2018, p. 20).

Increasingly many of these issues are subject to debate and there are concerns raised regarding the funding of 16-19 education. For instance, drawing on data from the IFS, Foster (2018) argues that on average the funding available for 16-19 years-old learners is not as much as the funding in higher education and is 13 per cent lower than the funding in 11-16 education. Additional funding conditions have been introduced and these funding conditions, concern learners without the necessary GCSE grades in maths and English, who are now required to study those subjects post-16. Furthermore, the *formula protection funding* introduced in 2013/2014 to reduce the effect of formula changes on providers will be removed by 2021 (AoC, n. d.). Although colleges have different ways to generate income in addition to the Department for Education and core BIS budget (see AoC, College Key facts 2017/2018: College income analysis 2015 /16) the underlying weakness lies in the fact they rely on public funding and there are limited opportunities to increase enrolment fees. For example, Chart one below shows an enduring reduction in college income over the years.

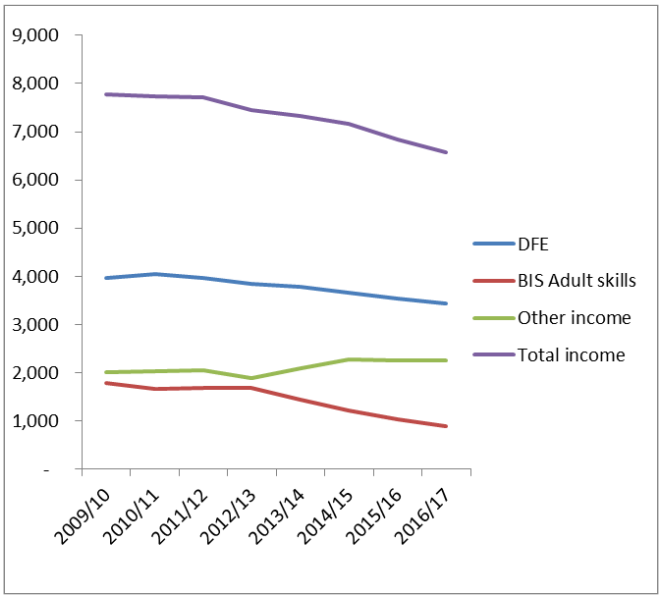


Chart 1: College income actual and forecast (AoC, 2014)

In the forgoing section, I have critically explored the government's ambition of setting in place reforms of the FE sector that have occurred since the 1980s. The fundamental premise of this section suggests that the reform movement has been built around three key pillars. Firstly, the political intent to implement quality assurance systems, including inspection frameworks, that are focused on meeting various stakeholders' needs, and the integration of an outcomes-based component in the funding allocation model. Secondly, the political will to accentuate the role of FE colleges within the context of globalisation and the *skills-driven agenda*; and thirdly, the political intention to reduce public spending and the budget deficit.

Critiques of the reform movement have described the current state of the FE college sector as overloaded with reforms and state-led regulations. The next section will critically examine the anticipated outcomes of these reforms and the impact state-led regulations have had at the institutional level and on the sector's value level.

Outcomes resulting from the Government's reform of FE colleges

The range of outcomes resulting from Government reforms that have had a direct impact on GFECs, cannot be comprehensively analysed within the context of this study. One indication however is that recent reforms have led to changes in the curriculum post-16 (BIS, 2016; p. 7), along with an overhaul of technical education to achieve better alignment with the academic pathway (Foster & Powell, 2018), that has seen the introduction of the 16 to 19 study programmes.

A series of reforms have also been introduced to increase the number of young people taking part in education and training. Notably, the raising of the participation age (RPA) since 2015 has imposed upon young learners the need to stay in education or training until they are 18 (DfE, 2016). Significantly, GFECs are also facing greater scrutiny and accountability from various stakeholders with the implementation of performance measures. These performance measures include progress, attainment, retention, destinations and progress in English and maths (for students without a GCSE pass at A*-C in these subjects). The DfE (2017, p. 7) notes that accountability in colleges has: "(…) been reformed to set higher expectations, and to make the system fairer, more ambitious, and more transparent".

The government's reforms have also accelerated institutional mergers. In the summer of 2015, the Government introduced a series of reviews of both FE and sixth form colleges with the aim: ''To move towards fewer, often larger, more resilient and efficient providers'' (BIS, 2015, p. 3; DfE, 2017, p. 26): a review process that ended in March 2018 (ESFA, 2018). Figure two (p.25) shows the number of mergers which have taken place from 1993 to 2018.

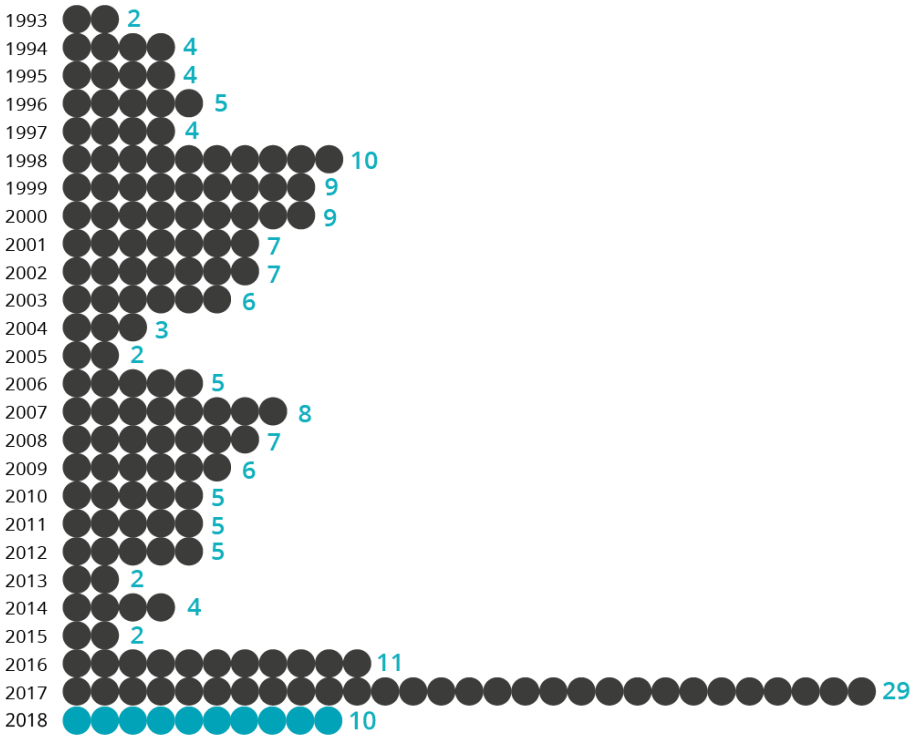


Figure 2 College mergers 1993 to 2018 (AoC, n. d.)

Noticeably, the sector has seen an increase in the number of GFECs facing financial difficulties that has also led to poor performance in the sector (Ofsted, 2014/15) and a fall in the number of GFECs. This trend has taken place over the past two decades and is on a path of continuation across the United Kingdom where FE college numbers have reduced from 416 in 2010/11 to 385 in 2013/14 (DfE, 2015; p. 5).

In 2015, the National Audit Office (NAO) published *Overseeing financial sustainability in the further education sector* which demonstrated that FE colleges are in flux. For example, according to the SFA assessment, 12 per cent of colleges (29 out 244) were found to be financially inadequate by the end of 2013/14 (NAO 2015). The SFA has defined "A college with inadequate financial health as being in financial difficulty, with a significant risk of being unable to fulfil its contractual duties" (NAO, 2015; p. 6). The AoC (2014) reported that the number of colleges reporting a loss rose from 70 in 2011-12 to 117 in 2012-13 (48 per cent of the total). This had an impact on the number of learners and between 2013-2014 and 2014-2015, GFECs ''lost almost 267,000 learners nationwide as their funding streams reduced'' (Ofsted, 2014/15; p. 16).

The loss in funding streams also saw a reduction in the number of FE colleges. In November 2017, DfE published national statistics indicating a decline in the number of FE colleges from 402 in 2011/12 to 381 in 2015/16 across England, Wales, and Scotland (DfE, 2017). In England, the number of FE colleges decreased by 62 to 341 between 2000/01 and

2011/12 (DfE, 2015; p. 5). This trend has continued and data provided by the AoC shows a reduction in the number of GFECs from 209 in September 2016 to 179 in August 2018 (AoC, 2018) and is further evidence of the sector's financial health. Overall, the NAO (p.9, 2015) has noted a considerable worsening of the financial health of the FE college sector from 2010/11 to 2015 and claims that:

> (…) advances of funding, paid out by the SFA and intended to be repaid in the short term, had risen to £49 million in September 2013. By September 2014, the SFA had converted advances of £40 million at 3 colleges to grants, meaning they would not be repaid. The outstanding balance, including new advances, stood at £45 million by February 2015, relating to 13 colleges.

The complex character of the FE sector and the context in which they operate, means that the extent to which financial pressures affect GFECs is dependent on a range of factors (NAO, 2015; p. 7).

Contested nature of the Government's reform on colleges and teachers

The combined effect of reductions to public funding along with new funding guidelines which advocate the withdrawal of funds from colleges which do not meet their targets has resulted in a complicated trajectory for GFECs. With increasingly complex financial constraints (AoC, 2014; BIS, and DfE 2011; FETL, 2019; Hargreaves & Fink, 2006), changing student profiles and expectations, (Hargreaves & Fink, 2006; Simkins & Lumby, 2006) as well as rising levels of competition to attract students and maintain funding, means that GFECs increasingly operate in environments exposed to free-market principles (Lambert, 2013; Lambert, 2015; Simkins & Lumby, 2006). The environment in which GFECs now operate is consumer-driven (Department for Business, Innovation and Skills, and DfE, 2011; FETL, 2019), and underpinned by a relentless pursuit of efficiency, indicators and effectiveness (Clarke as cited in Sachs, 2001; p. 151). For Coffield and Williamson (2011, pp. 3:11) this trend has been in evidence since the 1980s when business-like jargon replaced the language of education in the FE sector and that: "The market model has turned further education colleges into skills factories". Shain and Gleeson (1999) go on to suggest that as a result of on-going government demands imposed on the sector, a different breed of leader has arisen with managerialism ideals which diverge from those of teachers. This has led Coffield and Williamson (2011, pp. 3:48) to suggest quality in education is evaluated in terms of its adherence to the "testing regime" and public policy, which is enforced by Ofsted. Both Coffield and Williamson (2011, p. 48) are alarmed by this trend and note: "The main driving force for change in England has become fear: fear of poor exam results, fear of poor inspection

grades, fear of sliding down the national league tables, and fear of public humiliation and closure".

All of these changes are taking place in an educational context which is described as uncertain and unpredictable (McLachlan, 2014; FETL, 2019) and is arguably characterised by increasing workforce casualisation and deterioration of working conditions (Shain & Gleeson, 1999; FETL, 2019). What's more, it is also argued that the conditions which promote change in GFECs providers are also instrumental in reducing time allocation for critical pedagogy and professional development (Gleeson, Hughes, O'Leary, & Smith, 2015, p. 90). Further changes have taken place at the teaching level and the provision of a compulsory teaching qualification has been removed since September 2013. Currently, GFECs decide on the nature of the teaching qualification their teachers should have: the removal of regulations relating to initial teacher education sets the backdrop for arguments against the dominant trend in government policy towards deregulation (BIS, 2012, p.4). Notions of managerialism and performativity linked to concepts such as quality, quality improvement and Ofsted criteria, set the backdrop for this study. The study investigates the management of CPD in GFECs, following a '*failed*' Ofsted inspection as they strive to achieve an improved grading of "good".

Rationale for the study

My interest in the area of staff professional development, originated from my own experience of working in the FE sector. During this period, I was responsible for managing the higher education provision of a suite of both undergraduate and postgraduate academic and professional programmes, in the area of Business and Management at a large GFEC. Although business and management higher education courses do not fall under the remit of Ofsted, as an employee in the sector, I witnessed first-hand the relentless pressure on staff that resulted from rumours concerning an impending Ofsted visit in response to a previous "inadequate" or "requires improvement" grading. As a result of these rumours, FE teachers were continuously observed and graded until their performance was deemed "good" and/or until completion of the "rumoured" Ofsted visit.

The methodology and methods employed

At the start of the research process, I began by exploring different philosophical positions and their subsequent paradigms and also the associated methodological approaches. This enabled me to quickly identify the strengths, weaknesses, and assumptions of different philosophical positions, and during the course of the research, I was able to align both the research design and theoretical assumptions according to my philosophical worldview. Essentially my aim was to be able to convey and capture the richness and particularities of the

various continuing professional development approaches taken by GFECs, in response to a negative Ofsted inspection. As a result, I quickly came to the conclusion that a qualitative approach would be more appropriate to the research question and I therefore adopted a case study approach in order to answer my question.

The study is interpretivist in nature, and takes a social constructivist perspective. Of equal importance is the ontological stance I have adopted, as this strengthens the research design. Ontologically I have adopted a relativist stance, and particularly that of constructivism which implies that social phenomena and their meanings are in a constant flux of change (Bryman, 2016; King & Horrocks, 2011).

All of the eleven colleges included in the study, were inspected under the same Ofsted *common inspection framework* (CIF) in order to avoid discrepancies in analysis. Further criteria applied to the selection of cases are summarised as follows:

- Overall effectiveness: good or better
- Quality of teaching, learning and assessment: good or better
- Location: England.

By way of additional information, the assessment variable: *effectiveness of leadership and management* in all of the included colleges was either "good" or better. This was not the case for the assessment variable *outcomes for learners* but by selecting each of the included colleges according to the same variables, I had hoped to achieve comparable outcomes.

In line with this view, the data collection method consisted of in-depth, semi-structured interviews and participants were selected using purposeful sampling. I conducted a total of 11 interviews with 14 participants over a period of five months. An overview of the profiles of the 14 participants is available in Table four. The interviews were carried out on a one-to-one basis apart from three which were group interviews. Considering the difficulties encountered in accessing the participants due to their very busy work schedule and in conjunction with the supervisory team, it was considered that this minor change (one-to-one interview to group interview) in methodology would not affect the overall research methodology. The interview schedule for both the one-to-one and group interviews was informed by themes that emerged from the literature and within the interview context, I asked broad questions relating to the five research objectives (page 30). The interview schedule has been mapped against the research objectives and is included in Appendix three.

The interviews were recorded and on completion were transcribed, and subsequently analysed following an inductive approach based on constructivist grounded theory (Charmaz & Bryant, 2011). Categories and codes that emerged from the data were analysed using a deductive approach to provide answers to the research question, along with the five research

objectives that had previously been identified from the literature. Findings from the data are presented and analysed using direct quotations from the transcribed interviews.

Aim of the study

The aim of the study hinges on one central question: "How do GFECs in England manage their continuous professional development (CPD) when intentionally aiming to improve an Ofsted inspection from an "inadequate" or "requires improvement" to an Ofsted grading of "good"? Based on Ofsted's four-point grading system, the study critically reviewed the CPD of a cluster of GFECs in England (n=11) which have improved the quality of their teaching, learning, and assessment, and moved from an Ofsted grade of three (requires improvement) or grade four (inadequate) to a grade two (good). The purpose of the study was to investigate whether the range of continuing professional development (CPD) activities identified in the eleven colleges promoted a particular model of professional practice that could be used to create a framework through which CPD could be analysed. Five research objectives were also developed from the literature that focused on teacher continuing professional development in GFECs and were used to inform the interview schedule.

A search strategy was also developed in order to identify relevant material and is described below.

Search strategy: The search strategy included material from various online academic databases, university library catalogues and *Google Scholar*. Internet searches were also conducted to identify relevant grey literature: a review of reference lists yielded additional source materials. Combinations of search terms and *Boolean* operators were used to generate the literature and included the following:

> "'further education', 'FE colleges', 'staff development', 'teacher and/professional development and/or autonomy', 'model of and/or framework', 'CPD and/or continuing professional development', 'performativity', 'managerialism', 'barriers to CPD', 'FE and incorporation', FE and Ofsted'".

Additional filters were used to increase the relevance of the references and included date of publication and subject. Inclusion criteria also included: 1) studies examining the context of FE and general FE colleges in the United Kingdom; 2) peer reviewed articles published in English; 3) book chapters, and 4) any relevant material from the grey literature. Any materials that dealt with the issue of teacher CPD in primary and secondary schools were excluded.

Search outcome: The search generated 141 articles which were reviewed at abstract level and of these, a total of 109 were excluded. A total of 32 articles were retrieved and on full review, a further two were excluded, giving a total of 30 articles for inclusion.

Analyses of data: The CPD initiatives undertaken in the 11 GFECs will be examined taking into account Kennedy's (2005, p. 247; 20014a, p. 348) recommendations to go beyond "(…) the obvious structural characteristics [to uncover] the underpinning influences, expectations and possibilities" and will also include her framework of CPD models. Five research objectives were also identified from the literature search and these objectives helped to inform the development of the interview schedule. A critical examination of the CPD activities that were identified by the interview participants helped to inform a coherent discussion of the research question and the analysis is underpinned by an approach that draws on Kennedy's recommendations. The five research objectives are as follows:

- To critically evaluate the appropriateness and efficiency of existing continuing professional development activities aimed at improving teaching and learning;
- To analyse the extent to which the fundamental purpose of the CPD is a transmissive or transformative model;
- To investigate, using the existing CPD configuration, whether the approach taken, prioritises individual or collective development;
- To critically examine the contribution of resources, roles and responsibilities of individuals and teams in their current configuration;
- To formulate a framework through which CPD practices can be analysed.

Scope of the study

The study does not pretend to provide a complete assessment of all CPD practices currently in-use across all GFECs in England. The study is only concerned with GFECs that have significantly improved their overall Ofsted effectiveness grade as indicated by the aim of the study. It is also to be noted that all eleven colleges were inspected under the 2015 common inspection framework (CIF). The study adopts an organisational perspective rather than a teacher perspective, and as a result, does not offer an in-depth analysis of teachers' views on the research objectives.

Contribution to knowledge and practice

In answering the main research question, the study achieved several objectives. The first of these relates to the field of further education as an area that is under-researched. This is echoed in a well-established body of literature which calls for more empirical studies into the FE sector (Lucas, 2004; Robson, 1998; Shain & Gleeson, 1999; Simkins & Lumby, 2006). Further, research on teacher continuing professional development has predominantly examined issues in school teaching (Robson, 2006, p.10) and Lucas (2004, pp. 169-175) suggests there are few studies which consider teachers in FE colleges and ideas concerning the professional practice of FE teachers.

The study also shines a light on teacher continuing professional development in GFECs post deregulation that took effect from May 2013. As a consequence, the thesis offers a fresh insight into teacher CPD in GFECs and goes beyond previous research, which primarily explores teachers' working conditions within a context of de-professionalism that has been sharpened and accelerated (though not originally created) by rising fees, marketisation, managerialism, performativity, mergers, funding cuts, and area reviews.

Writing in 2015, Forest recommended that future research in the area should examine the extent to which the inspection framework was constraining the improvement of professional practice and the ability to innovate and take risks. This thesis partially answers Forest's point with the evidence generated from the interviews indicating both compliance and resistance against the CIF amongst those interviewed (Figure six; Figure eight). Recent Ofsted changes have made graded lesson observation redundant, and some colleges are encouraging their staff to take more risks and demonstrate innovation in their TLA approach but further research is needed to examine the extent to which such behaviour is actually commonplace across GFECs.

Kennedy (2005, p. 325) in her work has also lamented the lack of studies looking at the range of continuing professional development initiatives in a comparative manner. This study supports and expands research by Kennedy on continuing professional development that was undertaken in the Scottish FE sector. It aims to propose a framework of CPD (Figure seven) which seeks to extend existing frameworks along the lines of those developed by Kennedy (2005; 2014a; 2014b). Equally important, is the finding that the purpose of CPD is on a continuum from transmissive to malleable. The range of CPD activities identified in this research emphasises the five models currently recognised in the literature and includes both top-down and developmental approaches (Table six; Figure eight) and also various levels of compliance and autonomy. That said, the CPD activities identified, also prioritised both collective and individual development (page 99). Significantly, the drive from the senior management team and middle managers, to implement a series of mechanisms to support the

achievement of higher standards in teaching and learning through continuous improvement, has led to a culture change (Figure six; Figure eight).

Looking to the future, it is envisaged results from this study will form the basis of future publications in peer reviewed journals. Of particular interest, is the link between academia and professional practice and how GFECs attempt to improve quality in TLA. The results also have relevance to the FE Commissioner's agenda, particularly, in the area of key quality improvements (Burke, 2017). An aspect of this programme, is that it focuses on helping colleges on the verge of being graded 3 or 4 to devise an improvement plan through peer-to-peer and partnership work, with stronger colleges (Burke, 2017): the programme is available through funding until March 2020. A second feature of the programme centres on the use of diagnostic assessments that aims to identify colleges: "[which] have the early symptoms of becoming unwell, but which haven't yet developed the full illness" (Burke, 2017). Moreover, in line with above, the study also addresses part of the report published by the *157 Group*, (rebranded COLLAB in 2016), which indicated the importance placed by colleges in the sector on CPD and its role in terms of workforce improvement.

Structure of the Thesis

The study comprises five elements namely:

Chapter 1 Introduction

Chapter 2 Continuing Professional Development

Chapter 3 Methodology

Chapter 4 Data analysis and findings

Chapter 5 Concluding comments

Chapter one gives an introduction to the area and critically reviews the contextual background in which GFECs have evolved. The chapter examines the identity, role, performance and image of GFECs and provides an in-depth analysis of current factors pushing for change and the implications these changes have for GFECs in the sector. Chapter two provides a comprehensive examination of the current literature, and depicts the changing paradigms in the management of GFECs with the emergence of a managerialist approach and how notions of managerialism and performativity influence teacher CPD at policy and practice level. The chapter concludes with a critical evaluation of current CPD opportunities in GFECs and a critical review of a range of CPD models. Chapter three explains the methodology employed: a consistent theme of this chapter is the justification of choice of methods and the alignment between research strategy and research design. The chapter concludes with a

detailed and critical examination of a range of ethical considerations pertinent to the area. Chapter four provides a report on the findings and chapter five draws together the analysis and how the findings relate to the themes identified in the literature review. It concludes by proposing a conceptual model for CPD and discusses the implications of the research findings to the area of GFECs. The final part of the chapter examines the limitations of the study and makes recommendations for future research in the area.

Conclusion

Through this introductory chapter, I have provided a summary of the proposed study along with an overview of the changes currently affecting GFECs in England, and the relevance of teacher continuing professional development, as a means to improving the quality of teaching, learning and assessment in the sector.

Chapter Two Literature review

Introduction

This chapter examines the key question of continuing professional development of teachers in general further education colleges (GFEC) in the UK: it begins with a discussion of government policies that focus on managerialism and performativity and the impact these policies have on teaching and learning. In particular, it will be argued that the GFEC sector faces considerable changes which hinge on the Government's intent to meet the "skills-driven agenda" through better quality vocational teaching. The chapter explores the contextual background to teacher Continuous Professional Development (CPD) and evaluates current practices, including barriers that hinder teachers from pursuing CPD. Exploring the professional development of Further Education (FE) teachers from the late nineteenth century to the early 2000s, the chapter charts the evolution of CPD through the prism of shifting discourses. In the final section, the chapter critically evaluates various models of teacher CPD by examining their constituent features, purported purpose, and concludes with a discussion on the choice of Kennedy's analytic framework for analysis of the data used in this study.

Changing paradigms: managerialism and performativity

Coffield (1999, p. 479) has argued the lifelong learning sector is not a panacea for all of society's educational, social and political ills. In *Moving beyond skills as a social economic panacea*, Keep and Mayhew (2010, p. 568) discuss how skill policy is being seen as a remedy for all sorts of social and economic problems which could probably be better solved with more relevant mechanisms.

Addressing the issue of political involvement in the design of education policies, Rizvi and Lingard (2010) adopt a global approach, and discuss the role education plays in helping to close the gap in terms of global productivity and improving global competitiveness. For Rizvi and Lingard (2010), Coffield and Williamson (2011) there has been a shift in emphasis in education policy that has been facilitated by adoption of private sector styles of management. In the General Further Education College (GFEC) sector, political involvement is seen as a driving force in the field with changes facilitated by new legislation and the emergence of a managerialist approach in General Further Education Colleges (GFEC) (Gleeson, et al., 2015; Lumby & Tomlinson, 2000; Plowright & Barr, 2012; Sachs, 2001; Shain & Gleeson, 1999; Steward, 2009). Fryer, Antony, and Ogden (2009) in their theoretical paper, allege that from the 1980s onwards, the public sector has experienced significant change and not only has the nature of public sector services changed but so to, have the linguistics. Exploring the relationship between increasing levels of political involvement and educational

policy making, Ball (2003, p. 125) suggests current education reforms are designed around three constituent ideas: the market, managerialism and performativity that act together to form the basis for the political abandonment of compulsory provision of education by the state. Critical of managerialism, Plowright and Barr (2012, p.3) remark: "Indeed, any boundary between the professional boundaries and the manager has become blurred, with managerialism dominating the vocabularies and thinking within the sector." Kenway (as cited in Shain & Gleeson 1999, p. 448) argue this "economizing of education" brings the discipline of the market into the workplace, along with the legitimising language that goes with it. For example, such discourses encompass new notions that include ''value for money''; ''performance measurement''; "explicit standards of performance" and "greater emphasis on output controls" (Fryer et al., 2009, p. 479: Hannagan et al., 2007, pp. 486- 488). For others, the linguistics of market forces coupled with the implementation of quality and accountability systems, and national policy, underpin the change in paradigm which points to features of managerialism driving change at the individual teacher level and influencing how GFECs are run (Coffield & Williamson, 2011; Shain & Gleeson, 1999, p. 448; Simkins & Lumby, 2006, p. 13).

Impact of managerialism and government policy on teachers' agency

Government policy on teaching and learning hinges on the idea that learning in the further education sector should be tailored in such a way that it helps close the skill gap at national level. To that end, national standards have been introduced to achieve consistency across the sector. Increasingly however, critiques of government policy on teaching and learning, argue that public bodies rather than teachers are the ones setting the standards without any attempt to establish consensus amongst teachers (Coffield & Edward, 2009, p. 732; Finlay et al., 2007, p. 149). There is also an increasing reliance on managers rather than teachers for setting policy and in defining what good teaching looks like that has further alienated teachers from claiming ownership of their profession. For Lumby and Tomlinson (2000, p. 139) ''educational values have been sacrificed to rationalist forms of planning aimed at maximising income and outputs''. This has created a tension with critics of managerialism arguing the current policy rhetoric represents teachers as being in "deficit" (Finlay et al., 2007, p. 149) and that managerialism is: ''(…) economic rationalism with ulterior motives" (Shain & Gleeson, 1999, p. 448). Such criticisms are anchored in a debate around teacher agency and the values underpinning teachers' work ethic which has become subject to processes designed to reflect measurement and efficiencies that empower managers (Lumby & Tomlinson, 2000). The debate also focuses on the contrasting and often competing requirement of the academic-versus-business aspects of FECs that has driven the perceived dichotomy between the student-centred pedagogic culture and a managerialism culture.

Research seeking to explore different ways of understanding and conceptualising the effect of managerialism on the professional practice of FE teachers have however found that critics offer a simplistic professional versus managerialist divide (Simkins & Lumby, 2006). Interview data from eight principals, conducted by Lumby and Tomlinson (2000) show the evidence only supports to a limited extent, the rhetoric normally associated with the managerialist approach and conclude: "the assumption that these point to a change in values amongst senior managers can be challenged" (p. 139). This is confirmed in previous research by Gleeson (2001, p. 194) who argues the ongoing debates concerning the attributes of managers in GFECs are too narrow and portray managers as passive recipients of government policy. In effect, Gleeson (2001, p. 194) suggests a rethink of their role is needed and argues government policy: "(…) is interpreted by VET managers in a process that is best described as policy translation where the accent is on re-rendering or re-negotiating relations of policy and practice."

Gleeson (2001, p. 194) goes on to warn against: "The danger (…) of treating principals and senior managers as victims of funding in the reconstruction of FE practices at college level''. Others also reject the idea of compliant practitioners in response to radical changes at teachers' practice level that result from government policy on teaching and learning:

> (…) lecturers' position themselves within, and respond differentially to, new management cultures - some comply willingly, and a majority, we argue, are more strategic in their approach rejecting some aspects of the reform agenda, while accepting others in informing their practice (Shain & Gleeson, 1999, p. 453).

There is however broad agreement among commentators that the introduction of a business-like management approach has weakened the sense of teacher agency, and created a feeling of surveillance and mistrust of the professional's role (Avis, 2003; Coffield & Williamson, 2011; Forde et al., 2009). This raises questions on how CPD is then enacted upon within this context.

Impact of performativity and government policy on colleges

With the growing influence of managerialism since the incorporation of colleges under the Further and Higher Education Act 1992, tensions remain and those opposed to managerialism argue that GFECs are not commercial firms and are naturally exempt from the managerialist linguistics commonly used in the private sector. This is supported by the view that managerial discourse advocates efficiency as a universal remedy and fails to recognise the discerning features of public organisations (Rees as cited in Sachs, 2001, p.151). The origins of performativity can be traced to work by Lyotard, who uses the term to refer to processes

which are put in place to manage the "performance-efficiency" of a system (Cowan as cited in Forde, et al., 2009, p. 20). As managerialism is founded upon ''universalism and isomorphism'' it draws on the assumption that all institutions are identical in their pursuit of efficiency (universalism) and that commercial organisations are the most naturally occurring form of coordination (isomorphism). This is unlike public sector organisations that are considered deviant (Clarke as cited in Sachs, 2001, p. 151).

Through the imposition of managerialism GFECs are forced into a performative stance that is underpinned and driven by the achievement of targets (Coffield, 2000, p. 244). Similarly, Avis, (2003, p. 324) extends the critique and raises concerns about performativity which establishes a blame culture by over emphasising targets and accountability. Ball (2008, p. 51) is critical of a view of performativity that is concerned with a blame culture and proposes a model of performativity which seeks to challenge and improve practices *in use* through: "(…) a mode of regulation that employs judgements, comparisons and displays, as measures of productivity or output or value of individuals and organisation (…)". Underlying performativity policies, as Ball (2008, p. 58) puts it, lies a *modus operandi* where individuals and institutions must account for themselves based on measurable outcomes. As such, discourses on performativity can be seen to assert particular realities and priorities but as Coffield and Edward (2009, p. 372) note, the top-down approach to policy on teaching in the post-compulsory sector, ignores the specific needs of localities and their implications.

Despite broad agreement over the impact of performativity on the GFECs, there is also recognition that colleges are not passive recipients to government policy. The available literature also supports the idea that government policy is interpreted through: "(…) a complex and cumulative process, comprising not only the acts of translating national policy but also the effects of local and institutional factors" (Coffield, et al., 2007, p. 734).

Analyses by Simkins (2000), (reported in Simkins & Lumby, 2006, p.15) suggest that mediating factors such as the history and position of the college in the sector, the market conditions it faces, as well as leadership style, are all likely to lead to differing experiences in the detail of cultural change within individual colleges.

Impact of managerialism and performativity on quality and quality enhancement

Colleges of further education in England are inspected and regulated by a range of external bodies. This includes the Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted) that was instigated in the 1990s. The Inspectorate's remit is ''to inspect and regulate services that care for children and young people, and services providing education and skills for learners of all ages" (Ofsted, 2017). At the time of writing this thesis, and since September 2015, Ofsted

inspections are carried out under the new "Common Inspection Framework" (CIF) designed to assess the extent to which colleges' provision is aligned to the needs of learners (Ofsted 2015, p. 4). To raise standards in the sector, Ofsted helps GFECs not of good standard to improve, through monitoring their progress, and sharing best practice. In line with the CIF, the Inspectorate makes key judgements on the overall effectiveness of colleges which comprises four key judgments: the effectiveness of leadership and management; the quality of teaching, learning and assessment; personal development, behaviour and welfare; and outcomes for learners. Ofsted grades the four key judgements using a four-point grading scale including: *outstanding, good, requires improvement and inadequate* (Ofsted 2015).

The framework for inspection has been updated regularly since the 1990s, and the principle has remained the same consisting of "regular inspections based on published criteria". According to Husbands (2014) the impact of the quality framework has benefited the sector by raising standards and improving practice across the sector. There are however, question marks surrounding Ofsted inspections and concern that improvement through inspection has failed due to:

> (…) the variability in the quality of inspection teams, the reliability of their judgements, the interaction between a public inspection regime and an ever-tighter accountability framework, and the very serious challenges of sustaining improvement in the most challenging of schools (Husbands, 2014).

Several studies in further education have noted the growing influence of Ofsted on the GFEC sector which is illustrated by the multiplication in inspection and audit (Harper as cited in Lambert, 2013, p. 39; Lambert, 2015; Simkins & Lumby, 2006**)** and the nationally imposed accountability systems in curricula and assessment (Lambert, 2015, p. 11). For Gleeson, Hughes, O'Leary, and Smith (2015) managerialism is enacted through Ofsted inspections and the CIF. In a recent analysis, Coffield (2019, 2017) portrays the four-point grading scale as "(…) an example of unintelligent accountability" which is unfair, unreliable and unjust. According to Coffield (2017, 2019) such views are closely tied to the notion that the four-point grading scale is ineffective at capturing varying levels of effectiveness, even within a college. For Coffield the four-point grading scale runs counter to all thinking on quality, and actually results in poorer performance because achievement of grades takes priority over the quality of learning, and is even detrimental to working conditions. The argument has also been offered that GFECs whose overall effectiveness is either good or outstanding have internalised Ofsted evaluation criteria and will henceforth inspect themselves (Courtney, 2012). This is known as *panopticism* (where the object of inspection regulates itself) and is embedded in the CIF through privileging typicality. Essentially what this means is that, ''Ofsted assesses whether the Ofsted way is being implemented even in its absence'' (Courtney, 2012, p. 13). More

recently Ofsted has published a draft of the revised CIF which according to Young (2019) and White (2019) suggests a shift in focus from pupil outcomes to how the outcomes have been achieved.

Of equal importance however is the dichotomy which resides between the Ofsted quality framework and pedagogy that permeates quality enhancement. In effect, Coffield and Edward (2009, p. 371, 375) indicate that the culture of improvement in teaching in the FE sector is articulated around the sharing of good professional practice which brings its own challenges. To varying degrees, good practice often lacks the underpinning of research evidence and learners routinely have different needs making good practice difficult to identify. Furthermore, the authors argue meanings of good practice are contested, both within and between levels of staffing in organisations (Coffield & Edward, 2009, p. 379) and that "good practice" has been changed to "best practice" in official texts but the differences between the two remain unexplained.

CPD in General Further Education Colleges (GFEC) in England

This section traces and critically appraises teacher education and professional development, in GFECs in England from about the late 19th century to 2013. During this period the compulsory approach to teacher education and professional development had been revoked and de-regulation implemented, leading to problems surrounding the notion of teacher professionalism amongst different agencies.

The continuing professional development of teachers has progressively gained global attention (Fraser, Kennedy, Reid, & Mckinney (2007, p.153); Kennedy, 2005, p. 235, 2014a, p. 336, 2014b, p. 691). This interest in teacher professional practice, centres on some of the issues concerned with what teachers might do to adapt and excel in an environment described as "competitive, marketised, consumer-orientated and resource-poor", and where organisations are in flux, and spanning business-orientation and public accountability. In light of these challenges, the provision of continuing professional development opportunities becomes a necessity to better enable teachers: "(…) to handle these changes and to foster practices which are responsive to the educational needs of all children" (Dadds, 1997, p.31). Increasingly the notion of CPD is linked to improved school performance but it remains unclear to what extent teacher CPD is developed and enabled within the college context or even within policy (Hargreaves, 1994; Bolam, 2000). Fraser et al. (2007, p.153) claim that CPD policies, practice and impact remain difficult to clarify while Friedman and Philips (2004) emphasise the contested nature of professional development as a concept. This is supported by Coffield (2000, p.3) who argues that professional development is characterised by "conceptual vagueness". Due to the prevailing culture of managerialism in GFECs, most

studies have chiefly focussed on the performative nature of CPD policies and practice (Fraser et al., 2007, p.156; Kennedy, 2014b, p. 691).

Arguably, a focus on performativity through CPD forms the basis of a discussion about teacher as technician (Dadds, 1997) or "empty vessels" (Ball, 1994) and also fuels debates about whether CPD policies and practice are designed to adhere to national testing and school inspection regimes (Dadds, 1997, p.32). Megginson and Whitaker (2011, p. 3) articulate the notion of continuing professional development as "a process by which individuals take control of their own learning and development, by engaging in an ongoing process of reflection and action". Elsewhere, Biling (as cited in Lee, 1990; p. 109) considers that:

> Staff development is a deliberate and continuous process involving the identification and discussion of present and anticipated needs of individual staff for furthering their job satisfaction and career prospects and of the institution for supporting its academic work and plans, and the implementation of programmes of staff activities designed for the harmonious satisfaction of those needs.

Billing's definition offers a broader notion of staff development which recognises professional development happens via both the organisation and individual development. Lee (1990; p. 112) in his definition of professional development notes:

> Professional development will, therefore, be determined by staff development strategies, personal continuing education and development and the reflective interaction of the person within the teaching and learning situation with emphasis on student achievement.

Both comments neatly encapsulate the belief that professional development activities benefit both the practitioner and the organisation. This point has resonance for Megginson and Whitaker (2011, p. 4) who explain that continuing professional development is an umbrella term which encompasses: "a diverse range of development strands [that] may be held together and leveraged for maximum benefit". As an indicator of the current high profile of continuing professional development in the GFEC sector, not only does Ofsted emphasise the significance of good quality workforce and professional development but it also establishes a strong link between the effectiveness of workforce development, and leadership and management style. Ofsted (2015, p. 4) argues that the effectiveness of leadership and management is likely to be "outstanding" if:

> Leaders, managers and governors use incisive performance management that leads to professional development that encourages, challenges and supports staff improvement. […] Staff reflect on and debate the way they teach. They feel deeply involved in their own professional development.

CPD practices in GFECs

The *Further Education and Skills Inspection Handbook* (2016, 2018) sets out the criteria for judging the quality of teaching and learning. A teacher's ability to plan a lesson, differentiate between learners' needs, provide feedback, support learners and carry out effective initial assessment remains a key enabling factor of strong pedagogy in the Common Inspection Framework. Research by the CfBT and the 157 Group (rebranded COLLAB in 2016) has explored how to conceptualise good pedagogy in GFECs, with data revealing that while principals are well-practiced in outlining what good teaching looks like in their own institution, they often fail to articulate what it means at sector level. One consequence is that models of good practice in FE tend to be externally derived, whether explicitly by Ofsted or implicit in funding models. As such, there is a need for the sector to develop and articulate its own models of what good practice in vocational learning looks like.

One challenge is the need to conceptualise good CPD in the GFEC sector and how best to address the complex needs of dual professionals working in the area. Dual professionalism (Greatbatch and Tate, 2018; Plowright and Barr, 2012; Robson, 2006) recognises the vocational and pedagogy skills of teachers and also the need for these practitioners to update both set of skills as part of their dual professionalism. The literature reveals a range of CPD activities which are summarised in the following table:

Table 2 CPD practices in GFECs

CPD activities	Sources
In-house training	CfBT and the 157 group (2011); BIS (2012); Robson (2006)
Staff appraisal	CfBT and the 157 group (2011)
Mentoring	CfBT and the 157 group (2011); Greatbatch and Tate (2018)
Coaching	CfBT and the 157 group (2011); Browne, Kelly, and Sargent (2008); Greatbatch and Tate (2018)
Peer coaching	Browne et al., (2008)
Communities of practice	Browne et al., (2008); Sachs (2001)
Action research and peer observations	Greatbatch and Tate (2018)
Observation of teaching and learning	CfBT and the 157 group (2011); Gleeson, Hughes, O'Leary, and Smith (2015); O'Leary (2013)
Booklets on good teaching and useful tips, formal qualifications in TLA, compulsory training days and some electronic resources	Orr (2009)
Compulsory CPD (a minimum of 30 hours CPD each year) (in 2007) until de-regulation took place in 2013	Browne et al., (2008, p. 429)

Reflecting on the effectiveness of in-house training, Robson (2006) warns against their limited impact and lack of opportunities to engage with outside professional networks. Studies by O'Leary (2013) and Gleeson et al. (2015) point to the widespread use of classroom observation as a form of CPD across the sector: O'Leary (2013, p. 348) notes that such practice is indicative of a managerialist approach.

Recently, the argument has been developed that graded classroom observations are "summative assessments of a teacher's classroom competence and performance, typically undertaken on an annual basis and culminating in the award of a grade (1–4) based on Ofsted's

CIF 4-point scale" (Gleeson et al., 2015, p. 82). For Gleeson et al. (2015) such practice denies the creative function of teaching and promotes a standardised approach which "compl[ies] with prescribed notions of 'good' or 'outstanding' practice, and are notions that are largely determined, though not explicitly defined by Ofsted" (2015, p. 82). Further, in recent years O'Leary (2013, pp. 361-362) has explored classroom observation in relation to a restrictive and expansive approach to teacher CPD and argues there are significant caveats in the data related to performance based management (restrictive approach) and whether these can be alleviated through a formative CPD (expansive approach) where: "(…) the power differential between observer and observee [is] less hierarchically marked and seem[s] to embrace a more balanced, collaborative distribution of power in which the observee's voice [is] regarded as valid as the observer's".

Here, O'Leary sees the development of teacher skills and knowledge as a process of participation, rather than acquisition. Yet, Greatbatch and Tate (2018, p. 13) point to partial evidence supporting the idea that teacher development is best achieved through collaborative CPD including "(…) peer observations, formal and informal networks, coaching and mentoring".

Perceived barriers

In a recent report *Frontier Economics* (2017) raised a number of concerns about the amount of professional development delivered in GFECs. For instance, findings from the 2015 to 2016 Staff Individualised Record (SIR) reveal that over three fifths of teaching staff declared spending no time on continuing professional development (Frontier Economics, 2017; p. 3, 31). Only 12 per cent of teaching staff spent more than 30 hours per year on CPD. Research by Lucas and Unwin (2009), suggest the GFEC sector is a barrier to continuing professional development even though there has been an attempt to improve the workforce though legislation. Other studies have broadly reached the same conclusion and suggest barriers to CPD in GFECs commonly include: lack of time, lack of cover, institutional barriers, workloads, cost and funding (Browne et al., 2008; Lifelong Learning UK [LLUK], 2008; Orr, 2009; Straw, 2017). There is also evidence that part-time and temporary staff are the worst affected (Robson, 2006, p. 88; Straw, 2017, p. 3). A difference of opinion also exists between senior managers and teachers in terms of how strong they view the barriers to teacher CPD (LLUK, 2008; Orr, 2008; Orr, 2009). According to LLUK (2008) 59 per cent of teachers support the view that lack of time prevents them from accessing CPD opportunities, with 25 per cent of members of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) reporting likewise. Cost was identified by 33 per cent of teachers as a barrier to CPD compared to only 11 per cent of senior

managers. However, the difference in opinion between the two groups may not simply be limited to job roles, as the dichotomy may also be "rooted in behaviours" (Orr, 2009, p. 486) and achievement of targets linked to public funding taking priority over any considerations of improved practice. As a result, counting the number of CPD hours rather than evaluating its impact becomes the norm (Orr, 2009, p. 487). Reflecting on this issue, Orr (2009, p. 486) believes the symbiotic nature of the relationship between targets and systems, suggests a mutually dependent ecology of performance indicators and systems to indicate performance, and that performativity flourishes in a separate sphere from professional practice.

There is also evidence that staff in GFECs who have been successful in overcoming the barriers to engaging in continuing professional development, have struggled to find the space to apply the outcome of their continuing professional development and to effect long lasting change as part of their classroom experience (Taylor, 1993). Lambert (2012, p. 103) argues it is essential for individuals to have the space and resources to act on their newly acquired skills, if they are to be of lasting benefit to the organisation. For Kennedy (2014, p. 691) there has been a lack of attention given to CPD and of articulating a more social-democratic ideology that embodies the view of teacher as change agent. Kennedy argues that to be effective, continuing professional development should provide teachers with "(…) [the] autonomy and the ability and space to exert agency." On this view current CPD policy and models emphasise a bureaucratic approach which denies autonomy but advocate compliance and uniformity.

Since the early 2000s there has been a lot of change in the sector that has been driven by policy initiatives intended to enhance the opportunities and quality of professional development in GFEC. In 2013 de-regulation of compulsory teacher education and professional development alongside further reductions in public funding, has meant GFECs are seeking more flexible forms of CPD which offer "value for money" (LLUK, 2011, p. 4). Such changes have seen traditional views of teacher education and professional development eroded. These changes have occurred alongside ongoing political reforms which have seen the subject of teacher professional development being contested at both policy and practice levels, with data revealing limited teacher engagement in CPD. The drive for better quality teaching and learning in the context of a skills-driven agenda, is occurring in a context where there are reductions in workforce numbers, compounded by public spending cuts and college mergers.

Shifting discourses of teacher education and professional development

In 2004, Lucas undertook a review of the historical aspects of the professional development of FE teachers from the late nineteenth century to early 2000. This work was consolidated a few years later by the work by Steward (2009) who addressed developments that occurred from the beginning of the twentieth-century. Both studies offer a unique perspective on the evolution of teacher education and the professional development of FE teachers in England from the late nineteenth century to 2009. Lucas' review identifies five distinct eras in the FE teacher education and professional development. The first period spans from the nineteenth to the early twentieth-century where vocational courses were in fact apprenticeships, and which remained the prevalent route to training. Up until 1944 teachers in vocational and technical colleges did not benefit from any substantial forms of training. However, the period between 1944 and 1990 witnessed a growth in the number of FE teachers who held a recognised teacher training qualification. Despite this change, industrial experience served as a differentiating factor and although a teaching qualification was desirable, it was not compulsory for FE teachers (Steward, 2009).

Lucas (2004, p. 69) suggests this view of the FE teacher represents a deeply ingrained "culture of the old technical teacher" and although there was a rapid growth of the FE sector between the 1950s and 1960s, the expansion was not supported by a range of measures to improve the development of teachers (Lee, 1990). The Lingfield Report published in 2012 found the professional training of FE teachers had experienced no state regulation and according to Lucas (2004, p. 73) has led to heterogeneous teaching practices that halted the sharing of good practice, and hindered "(…) the development of a sense of collective professional values and standards among FE teachers". Despite the lack of regulation, between 60 and 70 per cent of full-time teachers had a recognised teaching qualification prior to incorporation in 1993 (Betts as cited in Lucas 2004, p. 74).

Greater state control gradually became a feature in the GFEC sector and was embodied by the 1988 Education Reform Act (ERA) and the 1992 Further and Higher Education Act (FHEA) which laid the foundations for the marketisation of education, and formula funding; it also made FE colleges independent from the local education authority (LEA) (Shain & Gleeson, 1999, p. 447). This period represented a turning point in government attitude towards the professional training of FE teachers, and was underlined by the requirement for all new teachers to have a teaching qualification (Lucas, 2013; Lord Lingfield, 2012). Between 1993 and 1999 the importance of funded CPD increased and funding for part-time staff was also available as the number of part-timers increased considerably during this period (Lucas, 2004). Increased training and development initiatives also emerged when it was recognised the FE sector was failing its learning community and resulted in "substantial investment in the FE

system in terms of opportunities for free staff training and development'' (Browne et al., 2008, p. 429).

In the period spanning 2000 to 2010, there were further radical reforms based on the vision set out in the 2006 White Paper *Further education: raising skills, improving life chances* together with *Equipping our teachers for the future and a regulatory impact assessment*. These reforms were intended to improve standards of teaching as well as recruitment, retention and CPD of teachers in GFECs (Aubrey & Bell, 2015; BIS 2007; BIS 2012; Lord Lingfield, 2012; Lucas, 2013; Pilkington, 2017; Plowright & Barr, 2012). In 2007, regulations replaced the *Further Education Teachers' Qualifications Regulations* 2001 (England) and led to the revision of the Initial Teacher Training for teachers in GFECs taking into account Ofsted's 2003 concerns (BIS 2007; BIS 2012). As a result of these changes, three compulsory teaching qualifications were introduced including: PTLLS, CTLLS, and DTLLS, and these have helped differentiate between a full and associate teaching role (Aubrey and Bell, 2015; Lord Lingfield, 2012). Following these changes, teachers were formally required to register with the Institute for Learning, on an annual basis and to complete at least 30 hours of CPD in order to maintain their qualified status (BIS 2007; BIS 2012; Lord Lingfield, 2012; Pilkington, 2017). Despite the changes in legislation, only 2,915 teachers became QTLS or ATLS (BIS 2012, p. 9; Lord Lingfield, 2012, p.14).

A study by Plowright and Barr (2012, p. 6) on the impact of the 2007 regulations has also revealed that the regulations also form the basis for a performative evaluation of teachers' performance: "Drawing on highly specific learning outcomes and assessment criteria, and appeared to offer only limited opportunities for professional mediation determined by individual and local need."

Aubrey and Bell (2015, p. 1) support this view and further argue that the problematic status of the 2007 regulations is matched by the increasing need for compliance that inevitably leads to an "competency-based model of teacher education, which for many, challenged existing notions of professionalism". This last thread neatly encapsulates arguments made in the report by Lord Lingfield (2012, p.14) which suggests that:

> (…) national effort has been made in the wrong place: towards standards, regulations and compulsion, rather than towards fostering a deep and shared commitment to real 'bottom up' professionalism among FE employers and staff.

Despite these concerns, Aubrey and Bell (2015, p. 1) acknowledge the positive changes brought about by the 2007 regulations including a rethink of teacher education, a drive for better standards across the profession, and the desire to establish parity with schools.

The 2007 changes were revoked in 2013 with the compulsory approach to teacher education and professional development removed and deregulation implemented. Commentators like Aubrey and Bell (2015) have been critical of deregulation and note that the lack of outside scrutiny may see the return to previous inconsistencies that existed in the sector prior to the pre-incorporation era. That said, deregulation does not necessarily equate to no teaching qualifications and since 2016 teachers can achieve Qualified Teacher Learning and Skills (QTLS) status through The Society for Education and Training (SET) (2018). The Education and Training Foundation (ETF) has also published *Professional Standards* (2014) to help teachers establish characteristics of effective practice, identify developmental needs and support initial teacher education. The latter includes the teaching qualifications framework approved for the sector which encompasses various awards at level 3 and 5. The most recent ETF report, published in 2017 on initial teacher training data for the period 2014 to 2015 shows teachers undertake the range of approved qualifications at either level 3 or 5. And since 2012 to 13, the most popular qualification remains the Level 5 Diploma in Education and Training and the Postgraduate Certificate in Education (ETF 2017). Less encouraging is the fact that enrolments on level 3 and 4 programmes fell by 29 per cent during 2013 to 2015, with the Level 4 Certificate in Education and Training witnessing a drop of 66 per cent (ETF 2017).

Towards an analysis of models of CPD

Analyses of the literature on models of continuing professional development of teachers in GFECs, reveal two major opposing strands on how the concept is interpreted by different agencies and communities. On the one hand, these opposing strands include current models of CPD that have attracted some criticism for their role in undermining teachers' "irreducible autonomy, the importance of teacher agency and their expert knowledge", all of which form the basis for the conferment of trust (Clarke and Newman, 1997). Critics posit that underpinning these CPD models, is a construction of teacher professional development based upon the 'empty vessel model' (Malcom, 1990), 'delivery model' (Dadds, 1997, p. 32), teacher-as-technician model (Dadds, 1997), or a 'competency-based model of teacher education (Aubrey and Bell, 2015) which emphasises a positivist approach to learning (Posthlom, 2012). The broadly accepted conclusion on these approaches suggests teachers adopt a passive and unreflective role, and are perceived as "(…) the uncritical implementer of outside policies" (Dadds, 1997, p.32). On this view teacher education and professional development can be seen to assert the "business efficiency" principles that are limited in scope and over-bureaucratic (Fraser et al., 2007, p. 166).

A second strand in the literature calls for an alternative teacher CPD model premised on the centrality of "the cultivation of informed understanding, judgement and 'voice' (…)"

(Dadds, 1997, p.32), and advocates a democratic approach to CPD which emphasises teacher self-efficacy based on critical collaboration and collaborative enquiry (Fraser et al., 2007, p. 166). Advocates of this approach argue that CPD models should support teachers in reconstructing their own knowledge and are most likely to lead to transformative change (Fraser et al., 2007, p.167). From this perspective, effective continuing professional development of teachers hinges on the notion that learning must be personalised for it to be used independently and constructed within social interaction (Dadds, 1997; Posthlom, 2012).

Table 3 Typologies of CPD models

	Aspects of teachers' professional learning						Overarching domain of influence				Approach to learning	
Model of CPD	Types of learning opportunities (Form)	Intellectual and motivational aspects (Role of teachers, content focus, active learning)	Coherence (in relation to policy, context of school improvement)	Sphere of action (where and how professional learning takes place)	Context (Support from Organisation)	Underpinning purpose of CPD	Student learning outcomes	Change in teachers' attitudes, beliefs, and perceptions	Impact on both organisation and teachers	Profession-wide impact	Positivist approach	Constructivist/social
Empty vessels **(**Ball, 1994**)**							☑				☑	
Delivery model (Dadds, 1997)							☑				☑	
Teacher-as-technician model (Dadds, 1997),							☑				☑	
Competency-based model of teacher education (Aubrey & Bell, 2015)							☑				☑	
Teachers as professionals (Clarke & Newman, 1997)		☑					☑	☑	☑	☑		☑
Bell & Gilbert's (1996) three aspects of professional learning (Personal, Social and Occupational aspects)	☑	☑		☑			☑	☑		☑		☑

Effectiveness of professional development (Birman, Desimone, Porter, & Garet, 2000)	☑	☑	☑	☑			☑	☑	☑			☑
Reid's quadrants of teacher learning: Formal-informal, planned-incidental (McKinney et al., 2005)	☑	☑		☑			☑	☑		☑		☑
Kennedy's (2005, 2014a, 2014b) frameworks for analysis of CPD models (Transmission, malleable, transformation)	☑	☑	☑	☑	☑	☑	☑	☑	☑	☑	☑	☑

It is not the intention of this study to examine which of a range of CPD practices work from the teachers' viewpoint and then develop further typologies of CPD. Rather, this study adopts an institutional perspective and aims to theorise CPD models "in use" in relation to their underpinning influences using the framework developed by Kennedy (2005, p. 247; 2014a, p. 348) for the evaluation of CPD models in the further education sector in Wales. Initially, Kennedy's analytical framework indicated the purpose of teacher CPD can be positioned on a continuous line and grouped under three categories namely: transmissive, transitional and transformative (Kennedy, 2005, 2014a, 2014b; Fraser et al., 2007). This formulation was subsequently revised in 2014 and the framework now accommodates a change of category from transitional to malleable (Kennedy, 2014b, p. 693). The benefits of using Kennedy's (2014b) framework are identified as follows:

- It theorises CPD teacher practices in relation to their underpinning purpose (transmission, malleable, transformative)
- It goes beyond the notion that student learning outcome is the outcome of teacher CPD (references?)
- It includes models of CPD from both a positivist and constructivist approach to learning (Table three)

Alternative models of teacher continuing professional development have been identified in table three that includes: "empty vessels" (Ball 1994), "delivery model" (Dadds, 1997), "teacher-as-technician model" (Dadds, 1997), "competency-based model" (Aubrey & Bell, 2015), "teachers as professionals" (Clarke & Newman, 1997), Bell & Gilbert's (1996) model of CPD, and Birman, Porter and Garet (2000) model of effectiveness of professional development.

These alternative models offer an interesting and contrasting view of different approaches to CPD, and are essentially based on the divide between positivist and constructivist approaches to learning (Posthlom, 2012). Taken individually, the models offer a limited visibility of what the possibilities are in relation to the underpinning purpose of teacher continuing professional development in GFECs, whereas Kennedy's (2005, 2014a, 2014b) analytical frameworks, make allowances for such outcomes.

Reid's quadrant of teacher learning, comprises two dimensions: formal-informal and planned-incidental (McKinney as cited in Fraser et al., 2007, p. 160). The model is interesting in the sense that it offers a perspective on the various contrasting but complementary ways teachers learn. The model also emphasises the dynamic role of teachers in creating learning opportunities for themselves. The model offers limited relevance to the current study for at least two reasons: one, informal learning opportunities which are teacher driven are unlikely

to be recorded as a form of CPD at college level. Also, their impact on teacher practice is also practically impossible to record in their various forms. In the same manner, incidental opportunities which by nature are unpredictable are also unlikely to be recorded as a form of CPD. Reid's quadrant of teacher learning would most probably suit a study which examines teacher learning from the teachers' viewpoint. More relevant aspects of the model, such as formal learning opportunities and formal planned opportunities already feature as key components of Kennedy's (2005, 2014a, 2014b) analytical frameworks.

To sum up, the reform movement led by successive governments in England since the incorporation of colleges in 1993 has had a considerable impact on general further education colleges. As a result of structural transformation in the FE sector, illustrated by public funding cuts, mergers, and rising employment costs, traditional views of teacher professionalism, anchored in the notion of teacher agency have been eroded. A new model of the teaching workforce is emerging, largely typified by the de-regulation of teacher education and professional development. Progressive and ongoing political reforms of vocational education have paved the way for discourses of teacher continuing professional development being contested at policy and practice level. At the same time, data reveal there is only partial teacher engagement in continuing professional development, despite the expectation for better quality vocational teaching as drafted in the skills-driven agenda.

In chapter three I discuss the methodology adopted to support this study.

Chapter Three: Methodology

In this chapter the aim and research objectives of the study are laid out including the rational for choice of research methodology. The chapter begins with an exploration of the research methodology including the philosophy that underpins the study by reflecting on both epistemological and ontological concerns. The chapter then moves on to discuss the choice of research design with a consideration of the strategies of inquiry suitable for this type of study. Clarifying how the research design supports the research methodology, the section discusses the choice of strategy and recognises the importance of quality criteria. Considerations in relation to the methods of data collection and data analysis are then discussed, followed by a critical examination of pertinent ethical issues related to the collection of data.

Aim of the Study

The aim of this study is to explore how General Further Education Colleges (GFECs) in England manage their continuous professional development (CPD) requirements in response to an Ofsted inspection that has resulted in an Ofsted rating of "inadequate" or "requires improvement". It seeks to examine how GFECs, that fall into either of the above two categories, set about making improvements through CPD in order to secure an improved Ofsted rating of "good".

The study will critically review the CPD activities of eleven GFECs in England which have improved the quality of their teaching and learning, and have moved from an Ofsted rating of four deemed "inadequate" or three deemed "requires improvement" to an improved rating of two that equates to "good". The CPD activities to be examined will take into account Kennedy's (2005, p. 247; 2007, 2014b) recommendations that improvement requires going beyond "(…) the obvious structural characteristics [to uncover] the underpinning influences, expectations and possibilities". To do so, the study will investigate whether the range of continuing professional development activities undertaken by the eleven colleges, promote a particular model of professional practice that allows for the creation of a framework through which continuing professional development activities can be analysed. The research objectives supporting this study are as follows:

- To critically evaluate the appropriateness and efficiency of existing CPD activities aimed at improving teaching and learning;
- To analyse the extent to which the fundamental purpose of the CPD is to provide a means of transmission, or to enable transformative practice;
- To investigate, using the existing CPD configuration, whether the approach taken prioritises individual or collective development;

- To critically examine the contribution of resources, roles and responsibilities of individuals and teams, in their current configuration;
- To formulate a framework through which CPD practices can be analysed.

Research methodology

Taking into account the recommendations made by Creswell (2014, p. 5) in planning a study, I begin this section by outlining the philosophical worldview assumptions which underpin this work. Then, I intend to highlight the theoretical assumptions underpinning the research design and the methods used in the study.

Research philosophy

It is not within the means of this study to discuss all possible philosophical paradigms however, a review of the relevant body of literature has identified a series of different philosophical approaches. For example, Easterby-Smith, Thorpe, Jackson, and Lowe, (2008, p. 74) briefly evaluate six different paradigms including: critical theory, feminism, hermeneutics, postmodernism, pragmatism, and structuration theory. Others, including Bryman (2016) and Denscombe (2014) have identified symbolic interactionism, while Creswell (2014) has reviewed four distinct philosophical alternatives including: postpositivism, constructivism, transformative, and pragmatism. In the case of Easterby-Smith et al. (2008) and Denscombe (2014), both suggest positivism and interpretivism (social constructionism) represent two fundamental philosophical positions in management research and it is their views which has informed the choice of research philosophy for this study. These latter two philosophical approaches (positivism and interpretivism) will be examined here.

In the case of positivism, the assumption is made that social reality exists externally and can be objective (Easterby-Smith et al., 2008, p. 57). This view is supported by Denscombe (2014, p. 2) who argues the positivist stance assumes that social phenomena "(…) can be studied scientifically" and the researcher must adopt a detached approach to the study of reality (Denscombe, 2014). As Bryman, (2016, p. 24) notes: "Positivism is an epistemological position that advocates the application of the methods of the natural sciences to the study of social reality and beyond".

The second philosophical position of interest is that of interpretivism and both Bryman, (2016) and Denscombe, (2014) suggest this is an umbrella term which regroups different research philosophies such as phenomenology (Remenyi et al., as cited in Farquhar, 2012, p. 19; Bryman, 2016; Denscombe, 2014), hermeneutics (Easterby-Smith et al., 2008; Bryman, 2016) constructivism (Bryman, 2016) and social-constructionist (Easterby-Smith et al., 2008; Creswell, 2014). Interpretivism can be seen as being in opposition to positivism and is critical of the philosophical assumptions held in a positivist paradigm (Bryman, 2016) as

interpretivism is an approach that seeks to explore different ways of understanding and conceptualising social phenomena. Unlike positivism, interpretivism places great importance on "(…) the centrality of the interaction between the investigator and the object of investigation, as it is only through this interaction that deeper meaning can be uncovered" (Farquhar, 2012, p. 19).

As this study is concerned with examining the role of CPD in relation to achieving an improved Ofsted rating, the use of an interpretivist approach offers greater potential in uncovering what this means in practice from the participants' own experience. Therefore, the study is interpretivist in nature and in the sections that follow I will critically explore, the epistemological and ontological concerns related to the study.

Epistemological considerations

Epistemological considerations in research are concerned with what counts as true knowledge which also infers questions about the methods to be used to capture knowledge. King and Horrocks (2011, p. 8) suggest: "Epistemology is the philosophical theory of knowledge" while Farquhar (2012, p. 17) explains: "Epistemology is concerned with the sort of knowledge that such-and-such is true (…)". Looking at the epistemological assumptions through constructivism, Flick, Kardoff, and Steinke, (2004) argue constructivist approaches render social realities accessible via their meanings and interpretations. The construction of knowledge through constructivism hinges on the premise that knowledge is constructed in a process of active production (Flick et al., 2004). Provoking questions about whether social reality is value free, Flick et al., (2004, p. 89) question whether it is "(…) directly accessible – that is to say, independent of perceptions and concepts that we use and construct". These are pertinent questions to address within social constructivism as it is an approach which advocates the view that knowledge is: "'Co-constructed' through social exchange" (Flick et. al., 2004). The approach adopted in this study is interpretivist in nature but it will also adopt a social constructivist perspective to facilitate analysis.

Other interpretive frameworks including postpositivism, transformation, pragmatism (Creswell, 2014; Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Creswell & Poth, 2018) and postmodernism (Creswell & Poth, 2018) have all been rejected for the purposes of this study. In the case of postpositivism this is reductionist in approach and imposes the testing of theories (Creswell & Poth, 2018, p. 25; Creswell & Creswell, 2018, p. 7) whereas the transformative framework is concerned with improving society for marginalised groups (Creswell & Poth, 2018, p. 25; Creswell & Creswell, 2018, p. 9). In the case of postmodernism the idea is that: "(…) knowledge claims must be set within the conditions of the world today and in the multiple

perspectives of class, race, gender, and other group affiliations" (Creswell & Poth, 2018, p. 26) and was also rejected as unsuitable.

Ontological considerations

What counts as relevant knowledge in the research process is an important ontological consideration as it is concerned with how social phenomena are seen and understood. Realist ontology, relativist ontology, and critical realism are essentially three schools of thought that help social actors define their ontological position. The first school of thought holds that social phenomena can be seen as objective realities which are independent of the social actors. Realist ontology (King & Horrocks, 2011, p. 9) and objectivism (Bryman, 2016, p. 28) embed the view that "(…) social phenomena and their meaning have an existence that is independent of social actors" (Bryman, 2015, p. 32). A second alternative view is that of social construction which holds social phenomena proceeds from human interactions (Bryman, 2016). Known as relativist ontology – relativism (King & Horrocks, 2011, p. 9) and constructionism (Bryman, 2015) this view expresses the belief that social reality does not exist independently from social actors and that social phenomena are not "(…) a pre-existent 'real' entity with objects and structures" (King & Horrocks, 2011, p. 9) but simply the outcome of social interactions. This ontological position implies that social phenomena and their meanings are in a constant flux of change (Bryman, 2016; King & Horrocks, 2011). The competing views that arise from these previous two ontological positions have formulated ground for a third philosophical position defined as "critical realism". Importantly, critical realism rejects "(…) 'hard' determinism" (King & Horrocks, 2011, p. 9) but recognises the probable influence of "(…) underlying structures such as biological, economic or social structures" (King & Horrocks, 2011, p. 9) and their influence on behaviour and experience.

Initially I decided to adopt a critical realist ontology for the purposes of this study. This was in order to take account of underlying structures such as the context in which the various colleges operated including: financial effectiveness, income, and staff and learners' socio-demographic characteristics to name but a few. But upon reflection and in discussion with the supervisory team, it was recognised that Ofsted applies only one quality framework to judge the effectiveness of GFECs and this framework does not vary according to the context in which colleges operate. Having reflected on Ofsted's approach, it became clear that the initial choice of adopting a critical realist ontology became difficult to defend and the decision to adopt the relativist ontology position of constructivism as the ontological position of this study was made.

Research approach

In this section I critically review three different approaches to research, mainly deductive, inductive and pragmatic (Farquhar, 2012). The choice of approach to research is an important factor in strengthening the coherence of a research protocol. Deductive reasoning is built upon a general statement or theory which is used to elucidate a social reality and a logical conclusion is reached by testing the conceptual framework (in situ). It is an approach that implies "theory testing" (Farquhar, 2012, p. 25) as well as an intention to generalise inferences about a sample to a general population. A critical review of the literature on deductive reasoning exposes differences of opinion amongst scholars and Reichertz (2014) rejects the idea of deductive reasoning as a valid approach to research for uncovering new realities.

An inductive approach is different to the one outlined above in the sense that the researcher starts from specific observations and moves to the general (Farquhar, 2012; Reichertz, 2014). To expand further, Reichertz (2014, p. 161) articulates the notion of qualitative induction as: "(…) the basis of all scientific procedures that find, in collected data, only new versions of what is already known".

The third, pragmatic stance to research combines both deductive and inductive approaches to logic by relying on a version of "abductive reasoning" (Farquhar, 2012). In examining abduction as a form of reasoning, Reichertz (2013, 2014) outlines the underlying assumptions and constraints it imposes, and concludes that abduction hinges on "a cognitive logic of discovery" (Reichertz, 2013, p. 220) that is largely reliant on factors that occurs outside the traditional realms of scientific inquiry, such as "(…) pure chance, a benevolent God, a favourable evolution, (…)". In the case of this study, there are a number of constraints including institutional and academic regulations, which make abduction as an approach to research unrealistic.

This study will espouse an inductive approach to uncover new theories grounded in the views of the study participants. Following a review of the literature to identify themes that guide teacher continuing professional development in GFECs, these themes will be used to guide discussions with the participants, and is an approach in line with that recommended by Kelle (2013). According to Kelle (2013) the possession of information in the form of theoretical preconceptions relevant to the area, is to be recommended in order to avoid data overload and inconsistencies. Adopting this approach will enable the data to be reviewed from a deductive reasoning perspective and to address the research aims and objectives of the study.

Strategies of inquiry

In practice, there are two commonly held approaches to research known as quantitative and qualitative (Farquhar, 2012; Bryman, 2015). To begin with, quantitative research is concerned with researchers who adopt a "nomothetic" view of the world (Farquhar, 2012; Burns as cited in Blaxter, Hughes, & Tight, 2010, p. 64) and is a view that regards social phenomena as forming distinct social realities which exist independently from social actors (Farquhar, 2012, p. 17). On this view, a scientific approach to the collection and analysis of data is adopted in order to favour quantification (Bryman, 2016; p. 32) and involves "(…) measurement, precisely and accurately capturing aspects of the social world that are then expressed in numbers (…)" (King & Horrocks, 2011, p. 7). According to Blaxter et al. (2010) use of this method usually involves the need for large-scale, representative sets of data.

In the case of qualitative research, Flick et al. (2004, p. 3) in answering the question "What is qualitative research?", see qualitative research as concerned with the rich description of "life-worlds, from the inside out", that takes into account the perspective(s) of social actors. As such, a qualitative research strategy is an approach that suits empirical studies where social reality is seen as being socially constructed and is understood only by examining the perceptions of the participants or actors involved. It is also an approach to research that seeks to explore different ways of understanding and conceptualising phenomena (Flick et al., 2004; Blaxter et al., 2010, p. 65).

In order to justify the choice of strategies of inquiry for this study and to demonstrate coherence in the decision, it is worth turning to Farquhar (2012). Farquhar (2012) argues that the choice of research paradigm will infer the adoption of associated theories and methods, which in turn improves the coherence of the research. In light of this, Farquhar (2012) makes a helpful distinction between three key areas to help strengthen the researcher's overall approach that includes the ontological, epistemological and axiological assumptions.

The ontological assumptions of a study informs the researcher's view of the world and Farquhar (2012) encourages researchers to establish clear connections between ontological positioning and epistemology. As epistemological considerations influence research methodology, the choice of method by those who adhere to a positivist stance will result in a research design that is suitable for the collection and analysis of quantifiable data. By contrast, a researcher who adheres to an interpretivist stance will select methods that enable the collection and analysis of "real, rich, deep data" (Blaxter et al., 2010, p. 66). This study adopts the latter approach and is interpretivist in nature, taking a social constructivist perspective.

Farquhar (2012) also suggests considering the axiological assumptions of a study to strengthen its research coherence and is concerned with determining the extent to which the research is value-free. Quantitative research is largely seen as 'value-free' and attempts are made to discard bias at every stage of the process: in qualitative research, the researcher acknowledges the existence of bias and takes this into consideration. An inductive approach that seeks to gather explanations from "actors' own frames of reference" (Blaxter et al., 2010, p. 66) as well as "(…) the subjective and social construct of their world" (Flick et al., 2004) is intended to strengthen the research coherence of this study.

Research design

Clarifying the notion of research design, Bryman (2016) makes a helpful distinction between the collection and analysis of data on the one hand and criteria that are employed to evaluate social research on the other. He notes that research design is the theoretical framework which supports the choice of data collection methods and also the criteria applied to data analysis.

Case study design

Yin (2014) suggests case study research arises out of the desire to understand complex social phenomena and is a view echoed by Farquhar (2012), Denscombe (2014, p. 54), and Flick et al. (2004, p. 147). These authors argue that case study research focuses on events in real-life settings and enables researchers to explain and provide rich, detailed accounts of how a particular event occurs within a given situation. This includes the ability to "dig deep" and look for explanations to gain an understanding of the research context.

To make case study design distinctive, Ritchie, Lewis, McNaughton, Nicholls, and Ormston, (2014, p. 66) recommend the "phenomenon" be explored from "(…) multiple perspectives which are rooted in a specific context (…)". Taking account of these recommendations, this study gathered data from "(…) multiple accounts involving people with different perspectives on what is being observed".

As Yin (2014) notes, case studies can be individual or multiple, but whatever choice is made, the issue at stake is to ensure that accounts of the case under scrutiny are complete and accurate (Gray, 2014, p. 274). The choice of a multiple, as opposed to an individual, case study design was chosen for the purposes of this study. The adoption of a multiple case study design seemed an appropriate means to eliciting the necessary data for understanding the management of CPD in GFECs following an Ofsted inspection. To give the study breath, a

range of senior leaders and middle managers, across various GFECs in different geographical locations throughout England were recruited.

Both Farquhar (2012) and Yin (2014) have identified a range of limitations associated with case study design, with rigour and objectivity identified as two of the most fundamental limitations. In particular, there are concerns about researchers overlooking strict guidelines and allowing equivocal evidence to influence the direction of findings. Farquhar (2012) counters this view by arguing case study research primarily seeks to arrive at an in-depth understanding of an event through the active participation of the researcher and that case study research will be subjective. To overcome these pitfalls, commentators have argued for a careful alignment of all the key elements that are necessary for ensuring a successful research design: the key elements include both philosophical and epistemological considerations, along with the research strategy, and the methods chosen for data collection and analysis (Farquhar, 2012).

A further limitation associated with a case study design, is concerns regarding the generalisation of findings (Bryman & Bell, 2003; Farquhar, 2012; Denscombe, 2014; Yin, 2014). Farquhar (2012) argues the aim of case study research is not to generalise and both Yin (2014, p. 21) and Denscombe (2014, p. 61) suggest case studies offer the potential to generalise to theoretical propositions through the emergence of what they term "analytic generalizations" as opposed to "statistical generalization". To that effect, Denscombe (2014) concludes that the findings from a case study are used for the development of theory rather than enumeration of frequencies. For this study, a "multiple case (embedded)" study design was used that enabled the researcher to seek evidence from multiple cases with a view to strengthening the argument made in terms of the validity, reliability and credibility of the data collected.

Rigour of qualitative research: trustworthiness

It is generally accepted that quantitative research can be evaluated against three criteria: reliability, replication and validity (Bryman & Bell, 2014). Other sources argue the quality of research designs may be judged according to four tests which include: construct validity, internal validity, external validity, and reliability (Yin, 2014, p. 46; Bryman, 2016, p. 41). But it is argued that while these constructs work well in quantitative research designs, they are considered inappropriate in qualitative research design (Bryman & Bell, 2014).

The question of how to evaluate qualitative research causes much debate amongst scholars (Bryman & Bell, 2014). LeCompte and Goetz (as cited in Bryman & Bell, 2014, p. 395) have explored this dissonance and suggested adopting the above constituents of quality associated with quantitative research "with little change of meaning other than playing down the salience of measurement issues". Guba and Lincoln however (as cited in Bryman & Bell,

2014: p. 395) reject the assumption that evaluating criteria used for quantitative research are suitable in the evaluation of qualitative research as this would imply: "A single absolute account of social reality is feasible" (Bryman & Bell, 2014; p. 395). For Guba and Lincoln, *trustworthiness* can be used as an indicator to evaluate the rigour of qualitative research. This indicator has been used to inform the current research design and is explained briefly below.

"Trustworthiness" is defined as: "The ability to be relied on as honest or truthful" (Oxford dictionaries, n.d.). In order to apply the concept of trustworthiness to a qualitative study, Bryman and Bell (2014) argue the account of social reality offered by the researcher must be credible. In this study, the establishment of credibility will be achieved by means of respondent validation (Bryman & Bell, 2014) as an initial check on the accuracy of the data (Denscombe, 2014; p. 200) and triangulation (Bryman & Bell, 2014; Farquhar, 2012). Triangulation is an important concept in research: it is an approach that enables the research question to be viewed from a range of different perspectives and provides a robust foundation for the findings and how the findings contribute towards knowledge advancement (Farquhar, 2012). Triangulation involves the use of multiple sources of data and has been embedded into the data-collection and data-analysis of this study.

A further level of scrutiny is generally achieved through transferability (Bryman & Bell, 2014) or on the basis of *fittingness* (Lincoln & Guba as cited in Leavy, 2017). The purpose of this study is to produce "thick description" (Geertzas as cited in Bryman & Bell, 2014; p. 398) of the social reality rather than breadth. Therefore, it is envisaged the findings from this study would potentially be transferrable from one college to another. Trustworthiness can also be accomplished through dependability (Bryman & Bell, 2014) and the provision of documentary evidence of the activities undertaken in each phase of the research process will be made available to that end. Establishing confirmability throughout the entire research process is also vital as a means to maintaining a certain level of transparency and every effort has been made to avoid personal opinion to influence the research process.

Data collection

The identification of suitable colleges and gaining access to those selected as appropriate, is the focus of this section. A list of suitable colleges was drawn up over many months using the Ofsted website and the inspection reports for individual colleges scrutinised to ensure colleges met study eligibility. The inspection reports for the eligible colleges were helpful in providing some background information on matters relating to teaching and learning, and existing CPD provision. They also helped form the bases for the design of the interview schedule with the senior leadership team (SLT) and middle managers.

Once a list of colleges had been identified, emails, including follow-up emails were sent to each of the colleges starting with those closest to London. On many occasions, the colleges did not reply or simply responded by saying they were too busy to be involved. As time was an issue, I resorted to making contacts through a range of professional networks that I had made through *LinkedIn* at the recruitment stage. As a result of these efforts, a total, of 11 general further education colleges agreed to take part in the study and in order to avoid discrepancies in analysis, all eleven colleges selected for inclusion, were inspected under the same Ofsted *Common Inspection Framework* (CIF).

Plowright (2011) has discussed the role of "gatekeepers" (2011, p. 163) in granting access to organisations to carry out research and the relationship between the "insider" and the "outsider" who might be perceived as lacking "(…) the professional socialisation experience to draw on in [a] particular context". The role of gatekeepers in gaining access to research populations is an important consideration. The refusal of a gatekeeper to grant access can affect a researcher's ability to recruit sufficient case studies, resulting in a catastrophic outcome. Fortunately on this occasion, this was not the case, as having previously worked in the general further education college sector, I was able to draw on professional networks to negotiate access to a range of colleges.

Further criteria applied to the selection of colleges also included the following:

- Overall effectiveness: Good or better
- Quality of teaching, learning and assessment: Good or better
- Different college sizes
- Location: England

In all eleven colleges selected for inclusion, the Ofsted assessment variable "effectiveness of leadership and management" was rated as" good" or "better", but this did not apply to the variable "outcomes for learners". The sampling decisions on which this study relied takes account of Bryman's (2016) assessment of the role of sampling in qualitative research and suggests that it is normally associated with "purposive sampling." Table four (page 63) summarises the role of the participants and their pseudonyms that were recruited to the study.

Table 4: Role of participants and pseudonyms

College	Participant	Pseudonym	Role	Data collection method	Location	Size of college
A	**1**	**Rob**	Vice-Principal Curriculum	One-to-one interview	London	Very large (23000 learners)
B	**2** **3**	**Rosie** **Brian**	Vice-Principal Curriculum Head of quality	Group interview	East Central England	Medium-sized (7000 learners)
C	**4** **5**	**Ana** **Claudio**	Principal and Chief Executive Director of Quality	Group interview	East Central England	Small (4000 learners)
D	**6**	**David**	Campus Director	One-to-one interview	East of England	Large (11000 learners)
E	**7**	**Joel**	Director of Curriculum	One-to-one interview	London	Large (13000 learners)
F	**8** **9**	**Michele** **Zac**	Principal Vice-Principal Curriculum	Group interview	South East England	Large (12000 learners)
G	**10**	**Claire**	Vice-Principal Curriculum	One-to-one interview	Buckinghamshire	Medium-sized (8000 learners)
H	**11**	**John**	Director of Quality & Staff Development	One-to-one interview	South East England	Small (3000 learners)
I	**12**	**Colin**	Director of Quality & Staff Development	One-to-one interview	North West England	Small (1600 learners)
J	**13**	**Sarah**	Director of Quality & Staff Development	One-to-one interview	East Midlands	Small (3700 learners)
K	**14**	**Mishal**	Director of Quality & Staff Development	One-to-one interview	East Midlands	Large (17654 learners)

Methods of data collection

According to King and Horrocks (2011), methods of data collection include the techniques or procedures social researchers implement to collect and analyse data. The methods or techniques supporting qualitative research methods, consists of interviews, observation, diaries, the generation of visual images, or other forms of text **(**King & Horrocks, 2011). This study is qualitative in approach and seeks to critically explore the management of teacher CPD in GFECs as a means to improving standards following an Ofsted inspection and move from an Ofsted rating of "inadequate" or "requires improvement" to an Ofsted rating of "good".

For Yin (2014, p. 118) there are at least six sources of information (data collection methods) that can be used in case study research and any one of them can and have been, the sole basis for entire studies. This is a view supported by Symon and Cassell (2012, p. 355) who suggest: "The case study may rely on a single method for collecting data; interviews are popular." The method of choice for this study was interviews: Denscombe (2014) classifies research interviews into three types: structured, semi-structured, and unstructured. Both structured and unstructured interviews presented a number of disadvantages for this study and therefore semi-structured interviews, which offer more flexibility in terms of content and the sequence in which topics are explored, were used. By adopting a semi-structured approach, the study participants were not constrained by a standardised process, and were able to: "Speak more widely on the issues raised by the researcher, [as] the answers were open-ended, and there was more emphasis on the interviewee elaborating points of interest" (Denscombe, 2014; p. 186). For Denscombe (2014, 187) semi-structured interviews can "be used developmentally" (Denscombe, 2014, p. 187) as researchers are able to alter interview questions "from one interview to the next, as a result of information given in previous interviews and a desire to follow up new lines of enquiry" (2014, p. 187).

Data collection for this study was through one-to-one in-depth semi-structured interviews (n=8) and group interviews (n=3) with respondents who were interviewed for approximately one hour. The choice of one-to-one interviews was made as it was felt this method offered considerable advantage when compared to focus groups. In Denscombe's view (2014), one-to-one interviews offer a range of benefits including convenience to the interviewee who can arrange to have interview timings fit around existing commitments: if more than one person is involved, this becomes much more complicated to organise. A further benefit of one-to-one interviews is that only one respondent is expressing his or her view(s) during the interview, making it possible for the researcher to identify the source of a particular idea or proposition. It also means the researcher will be more likely to stay on track during the

interview as there will be fewer participants taking part. And finally, in one-to-one interviews, the respondents' views are less likely to be influenced by views expressed within the group, or because more senior colleagues are sitting in the same room during the interview process.

In all, a total of three group interviews took place during the collection of the data. Although, I did not plan on conducting group interviews, this suggestion by some of the participants was made because of difficulties senior and middle managers faced in finding time to participate in the study. Following discussions with the supervisory team, I took the decision to conduct the group interviews to accommodate the difficulties faced by some of the potential participants due to time constraints.

Both the one-to-one interviews and group interviews were recorded using a digital audio recorder with the formal approval of the respondents: once transcribed, the transcripts were checked for accuracy by the relevant interviewee and were stored in a secure lockable drawer with access restricted to anyone not involved in the study.

A potential disadvantage of interview data, has been described as "the interviewer effect" (Denscombe, 2014, p. 189-90) whereby the personal attributes of the researcher influence the outcome of the interview and study participants provide answers to suit the interviewer. As a means to overcoming this difficulty, interviewers are responsible for ensuring the correct tone is set throughout and interviewees are made to feel comfortable in providing honest answers. Throughout the entire process, the interviewer is responsible for adopting the highest degree of professionalism and that includes being "receptive and neutral" (Denscombe, 2014, p. 190).

When conducting interviews, Plowright (2011) also recommends acknowledging the policy context in which a study occurs: this was discussed in earlier chapters which critically appraised the wider economic, political, and social context in which general further education colleges in England operate. Anticipating research participants may be tempted to drift away from the issues at hand, in order to comment on the wider political issues they faced, I made the conscious decision to manage this issue carefully and diplomatically should it arise.

Participants

Study participants were selected according to their function and role in driving the quality of teaching, and learning, and continuing professional development, in their respective colleges. Pseudonyms were assigned to protect both the anonymity of the eleven colleges and the participants involved in the study. Following Bryman (2016) and Plowright (2011) the approach to selecting participants was that of "purposive sampling," whereby respondents were chosen from a list which included the following job titles:

Principal and Chief Executive

Deputy Principal – curriculum teaching and quality

Vice Principal – people and planning

Director of Curriculum

Director of Learner Experience

Head of Human Resources and Staff Development

Head of Learning, Improvement and Standards

Data Analysis

There are many approaches to qualitative data analysis including: analytic induction (Bryman, 2016), grounded theory (Bryman, 2016; Denscombe, 2014), content analysis (Denscombe, 2014), coding (Bryman, 2016), discourse analysis (Denscombe, 2014), conversation analysis (Denscombe, 2014), thematic analysis (Bryman, 2016), and narrative analysis (Bryman, 2016; Denscombe, 2014).

Across the range of approaches available, Bryman (2016) notes researchers have notably opted for grounded theory. Charmaz and Bryant (2011, p. 347) posit the view that grounded theory confers many benefits to researchers including the constant comparative method as a means "(…) to increase[ing] the abstract level and explanatory power of their emerging theories". In doing so, grounded theorists expose richer insights that emerge from the data, propose new conceptual notions and uncover abstract ideas about underlying processes grounded in the data. Creswell (2014, p. 14) defines grounded theory as "(…) a design of inquiry from sociology in which the researcher derives a general, abstract theory of a process, action, or interaction, grounded in the views of participants". Typically, grounded theory suggests data collection and analysis proceed in tandem, repeatedly referring back to each other (Bryman, 2016; Creswell, 2014; Denscombe, 2014; Charmaz & Bryant, 2011) with the aim of achieving theoretical saturation through the collection of data (Bryman, 2016; Creswell, 2014).

Constructivist grounded theory is important for the purposes of this study on many levels: first, it acknowledges the researcher and participants are fully immersed in and not detached from the inquiry. As a methodological strategy, it is premised on the centrality of reality being constructed and interpreted by different agencies and communities. Furthermore, grounded constructivist theorists provide a critique of prior knowledge as being an impediment to the discovery of new realities (Charmaz & Bryant, 2011; Kelle, 2013).

Analysis of the data was conducted using a constructivist grounded theory approach: all of the interviews were transcribed, and thematic classifications that emerged from the data provided a framework for analysis. The approach also used Charmaz and Bryant's (2011) "initial coding" and "focused coding" technique that is akin to Aurin, Heath, and Howells (2016) "first cycle", and "second cycle" categorisation.

Ethical considerations

The importance of evaluating the impact of social research on stakeholders is set out in the Universities UK Concordat. Similarly, the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) sets out six important guidelines to ensure ethical concerns are addressed in social research. Considerations of ethical issues in social research, predominantly focus on the relationship between participants and researcher (Plowright, 2011). This is confirmed by Blaxter, Hughes, and Tight, (2010, p. 161) who believe most ethical issues in social research are concerned with "(…) privacy, informed consent, anonymity, secrecy, being truthful, and the desirability of the research". Gray (2017) sets out the sorts of ethical concerns that are important for informing the conduct of social research and these have been adopted throughout the course of this study. According to Gray (2010 research should be conducted: "In a way that goes beyond adopting the most appropriate research methodology, but [is] responsible and morally defensible". Conducting research "in a responsible and morally defensible way" means the researcher must ensure no harm comes to the participants (Bryman, 2016; Gray, 2014; Creswell, 2014). As this study required the collection of data from adults in senior managerial positions, it is unlikely that harm caused to participants in the manner Bryman (2016, p. 126) suggests, occurred: that is "(…) physical harm; harm to participants' development; loss of self-esteem; stress (…)".

But harm to participants can occur due to issues of confidentiality (Bryman, 2016; Plowright, 2011) and in order to ensure confidentiality was not compromised, the name of the general further education colleges, and of the study participants, has not been revealed. Ensuring anonymity and confidentiality across the 11 different colleges was important, and identities were concealed by replacing the name of the GFEC with the word *college* followed by an alphabetical letter.

The privacy of participants also needs to be considered and to this end, a range of safeguards were implemented throughout: following Bryman, (2016, p. 131) steps were taken to avoid "(…) delv[ing] into private realms (…)" and any personal information provided by participants remained confidential.

Providing participants with sufficient information about the nature of the research and its possible implications is also essential (Bryman, 2016; Plowright, 2011). To ensure participants were in a position to make informed decisions about whether or not to participate in the study, and following recommendations made by Plowright (2011, p. 158), study participants were briefed about the aim of the study and explanations were given in relation to the type of "(…) activities and/or questions that will form the basis of the data collection". Briefing participants about the nature of the research and what they are signing up to is vital but as Bryman (2016, p. 134) notes: "It is rarely feasible or desirable to provide participants with a totally complete account of what your research is about". Plowright (2011, p. 157) concurs with this view adding: "The golden rule should be: a little information is better than none and, at times, may be more preferable than too much". Participants were also informed of their "right of refusal to take part, without penalty" at the beginning of each interview (Plowright, 2011, p. 155). Having no connection with the participants, the ability to apply a penalty was not an issue for this particular study.

Following the briefing, participants were given an information sheet (appendix one) and consent form (appendix two) to sign if willing to participate. At the consent stage, Plowright (2011) also recommends a "disclaimer" document be included in the information given to participants, just in case an instance of malpractice is identified, or there were circumstances requiring authorities to be notified. By following the relevant guidance, I was able to build and maintain the trust of participants, with a view to establishing a professional reputation in the sector and avoid the possibility of deceiving participants about the nature of the study.

Conclusion

This chapter has explained the methodology employed for this study. It has set out the rational for the research design and justified the types of methods chosen by aligning the research strategy to an ontological and epistemological approach: the chapter concludes with a detailed and critical examination of some the ethical considerations relevant to undertaking research within the field of social science.

Chapter Four: Data analysis and discussion

The research question forming the basis of this study asks how General Further Education Colleges (GFECs) in England, manage their continuing professional development (CPD) as a response to improving their Ofsted rating following inspection. Colleges that received an Ofsted rating of "inadequate" or "requires improvement" were studied and in order to answer the question, five research objectives were derived from the main research question. The data collected to answer this question was obtained through semi-structured interviews (n=8) and group interviews (n=3), and the analysis is presented in this chapter. The chapter maps out the themes which emerged from the data and these themes are compared against Kennedy's (2014b) framework of CPD models. It will be argued that the findings emerging from this research can formulate the basis of a framework through which CPD in General Further Education Colleges can be analysed.

Categories and codes

Initially, seven categories and thirty-two codes were noted as emerging from the data (see Appendix four). However, these categories and codes were reviewed in line with the research objectives and five main categories were subsequently identified, along with a set of codes and these are listed below (see Stage 2 list of categories and codes page 70). Following further refinement, a final list of categories and codes was settled on, and is mapped against the research objectives (see Table five).

Stage 2 List of categories and codes (5 categories and 25 codes)

- **(1) Context**

  Merger

  Organisational restructure

  Reorganisation rather than quality

- **(2) Mechanisms**

  Self-assessment of the organisation

  Policies/Formal expectations

  Measures

  Observation profile

- **(3) Roles and accountability**

  Leadership & Management

  Loss of managerial staff

- **(4) Methods of improvement or tools (CPD)**

  Lesson observation scheme (graded and non-graded)

  Professional practice visits (PPVs) or learning walks

  Staff learning development days (SLD days)

  Formal qualifications

  External training event

  Industry-based training

  Team sessions/Twilight sessions

  Peer observation (accompanied)

  One-to-one support (Hub)

  Performance review

  Excellence Programme/The Journey to Outstanding

  One-to-one shadowing (Observers)

- **(5) Culture change**

  Change in staff attitudes (staff and managers) (wanting to)

  Not a blame culture

  Continuous improvement

  Drive from leadership (with recognition teaching is important)

Table 5: **Mapping of the categories and codes against the research objectives**

Categories	Codes	Research objectives
Configuration of CPD	Lesson observation ◦ Graded ◦ Non-graded Professional Practice Visits (PPVs)/Learning walks Excellence Programme/The Journey to Outstanding SLD Days Formal qualifications (External training event) Industry-based training Peer observation (accompanied) One-to-one support (Hub) Team sessions/Twilight sessions Performance review One-to-one shadowing (observers)	To critically evaluate the appropriateness and efficiency of existing CPD aimed at improving teaching and learning.
Purpose of CPD	Compliance (use of benchmark) (Ofsted) Developmental (autonomy, risk taking) Staff-led (wanting to) Progressive move away from grading	To analyse the extent to which the purpose of the CPD is to provide a means of transmission or to facilitate transformative practice?
CPD Approach	Collective development (i.e. Change in policy, Prevent, common TLA issues) Individual (teachers) (coaching for compliance or development) Individual ('Good' teachers)	To investigate, using the existing CPD configuration, whether the approach taken prioritises individual or collective development?
Supportive measures for CPD	Linking quality and staff development Accountability (roles clearly defined; restructure; more flatter) Observers (internal and external expertise) (accuracy of grading) (moderation) Advanced Practitioners Performance management-based approach	To critically examine the contribution of resources, roles and responsibilities of individuals and teams in their current configuration.
	Transmission versus transformative purpose of CPD	To formulate a framework through which CPD can be analysed

Discussion – CPD tools for improving teaching and learning

This section critically examines the current continuing professional development (CPD) configuration in the General Further Education Colleges (GFECs) which have been visited for the purposes of this study. The data revealed GFECs rely on a variety of CPD tools to improve teaching and learning, but there are two main approaches routinely employed by GFECs to tackling improvement: the first approach can be labelled as the "hard approach", and is top-down, data-driven and performance-measured. The second approach can be labelled as "developmental" and has an emphasis on individual growth.

College-wide CPD: staff learning development (SLD) days in colleges

It quickly became apparent from the one-to-one interviews and group interviews that all teaching staff had to take part in CPD activities, and that some of these CPD activities were compulsory. A common form of compulsory CPD across all GFECs is *Staff Learning Development Days* (SLD days). These SLD days are embedded in the colleges "Teaching and Learning" quality policies and are planned training events, providing colleges with an opportunity to train teaching staff on recent policy changes such as safeguarding, and more relevant teaching and learning skills. Study participants Colin (one-to-one interview) and Rosie (group interview 1), explain how SLD days are managed within the context of two different GFECs:

> Colin: *"We have roughly 5 CPD days which are SLD days or staff learning development days and they are on the calendar. They are scattered through the year."*

> Rosie: *"So those are days that are outside the teaching period. So a big number of those starts at the end of the summer term. I think the students finish about the 23rd of June and then we will have mandatory staff development days going through the 2nd of July."*

Accounts by both Colin and Rosie demonstrate that SLD days are driven by the senior leadership team (SLT) suggesting a top-down approach to quality improvement in teaching and learning. Colin and Rosie also made clear that SLD days are developmental opportunities for all teaching staff, thus inferring a whole-college approach to CPD. Both respondents referred to the use of the 'calendar', perhaps reinforcing the formal aspect of SLD days and the high visibility of such events. As both reports demonstrated, SLD days occur at different times throughout the academic year in both colleges, and in a way that is manageable for teachers and their workload. The formal and compulsory nature of the SLD days is captured by the word 'mandatory' (Rosie) and both participants outlined the high level of staff participation in SLD days, due to attendance being formally recorded by senior and middle managers.

The rationale for the choice of developmental activities offered during SLD days was also discussed during the interviews. As Ana (group interview 2) explains, the types of activities on SLD days include:

> Ana: *"(…) things that we've seen from going into sessions, others will be things that we were aware people are struggling with, mainly through informal discussions with staff or their managers."*

This view was also echoed in John's account of SLD days:

> John: *"Things that we've seen in lessons … managers identify things they know from their staff and we try to identify common themes to work with a large number of people."*

Rob's comments also shed light on the variety of courses on offer during SLD days, drawing on the idea of a 'menu' of courses that staff can choose from:

> Rob: *"(…) also training that people can opt for … or select themselves so there is basically a full menu of courses on their day of training … programmes hum…probably 10 or 12 different things on the day and all of the staff come to the centre and they can select the ones they want to go to … they can be directed to hum … if they need to improve in certain areas."*

Accounts by Ana, John, and Rob illustrate a feeding mechanism largely driven by the senior leadership team (SLT) and middle managers, which occurs at the college level to ensure CPD is strictly aligned to the college's needs. There is a view that SLD days are predominately a CPD opportunity to tackle common teaching and learning issues in areas where teachers are generally underperforming. As Orr (2009) has noted, CPD is largely organisation driven rather than individual driven. On the whole, SLD days appeared to be largely designed and managed by the SLT and middle managers, reinforcing the view of a top-down approach to CPD. SLD days also form part of an established and ongoing CPD strategy designed to address the needs of the colleges in the area of teaching and learning as a whole.

The identification of common areas for staff development to inform the design of "'the menu' for SLD days" enhances the relevance of the training sessions for teachers adding to the view that SLD days are an appropriate and efficient type of CPD. This view concurs with the literature which suggests that in-house training or *maintenance* training which encompasses all forms of training delivered by organisations internally, achieves higher quality of learning transfer than external courses, because the aim(s) of the session(s) are better aligned to current needs (Reid & Barrington, 1999; Robson, 2006).

The interviews also revealed that in a context of cuts in public funding, the SLD days were an opportunity for GFECs to cater for the needs of a large number of staff in a relatively short period of time whilst keeping costs down: SLD days also presented opportunities for networking and ongoing discussions amongst teachers. According to the data, top-down management of SLD days was influential in improving teacher attendance and participation. This finding contradicts a recurrent strand in the literature on teacher CPD in GFECs which often cites the lack of cover, teaching workloads, time and cost, as examples of barriers to attendance (LLUK, 2008; Orr, 2009; Robson, 2006; Steward, 2009). Despite the advantages identified to in-house training, previous research has suggested this type of training has a number of disadvantages attached to it as it: "(…) deprives staff of opportunities for interchange with peers in other institutions and of stimulation that fresh perspective may bring" (Robson, 2006, p. 48).

Staff learning development days within industry

Any discussion on the topic of teacher continuing professional development in General Further Education Colleges will also be concerned with the dual professionalism of teachers. Plowright and Barr (2012, p. 8) examine the notion of dual professionalism and explain what dual professionalism in the Further Education sector is: "One who, on the one hand, is qualified in a vocational or academic specialism, and on the other, is teacher trained and committed to developing skills and knowledge in teaching and supporting learning".

This conceptualisation of teacher identity is consistent with how the SLT and middle managers in the colleges perceived their teachers, and that GFECs recognise teachers' "vocational roots" (Lucas, 2004, p. 169) which made them "dual professionals". The notion of dual professional is however contested and other scholars resist the idea of a dual professional on the basis of its negative connotations. For instance, Shain and Gleeson (1999, p. 449) are of the view that the notion of a dual professional: "(…) reinforce[s] the tensions in the 'fractured environment of the FE workplace.'"

SLD days are not only concerned with teachers maintaining their skills in their vocational area of expertise but they are also concerned with colleges working in partnership with various professional awarding bodies as a means to ensuring teachers are up-to-date with the latest industry skills and knowledge. For SLD days that occur outside the college and take place in industry, they form part of an established CPD process that addresses the vocational development needs of the teachers. SLD days in industry facilitate teachers' involvement in vocational practice sharing, and the updating and improvement of vocational knowledge and

skills, in specialised communities. These contacts with industry also ensure continuing professional membership as Mishal, Director of Quality and Staff Development suggests:

> Mishal: *"(…) in terms of their own skills well, certain awarding bodies specify they have to go back into industry."*

In practice, there is no consistency in terms of how this form of CPD is managed amongst the GFECs which were visited. Claire, who is Vice-Principal, explains that SLD days in industry seemed to be more the responsibility of the teachers than the college:

> Claire: *"(…) there are vocational teachers who do not need to go back to industry and for them it is slightly different (…) hum … we probably don't prioritise that as much as their pedagogic skills."*

In contrast, Sarah emphasised the role of policy in ensuring there was a formal approach to the management of SLD days in industry in her college:

> Sarah: *"(…) we have a staff training development policy which says that all teachers have to do 5 days of CPD in their own sector every year to ensure teachers maintain a good level of vocational skills."*

In Sarah's account, the concept of policy is used as a legal artefact to mediate between the college and teachers. On the one hand, the policy enforces the view of the college in terms of maintaining current teacher CPD: on the other hand, the policy becomes a negotiating tool for teachers whose workload might prevent them from taking part in CPD. The accounts by Claire and Sarah indicate that teachers benefitted from a variety of CPD aimed at improving teaching and learning. These benefits include maintaining important links with their own industry and were additional to CPD activities specifically designed to improve teachers' pedagogic skills. The interviewees who took part in the study seemed agreed that this form of CPD would ensure: "(…) opportunities for interchange with peers (…) and of stimulation that fresh perspective may bring" (Robson, 2006; p. 48).

Online training

The use of online CPD activities is not widespread amongst the colleges which took part in the study. In fact, only one college introduced online CPD activities to deliver a formal qualification in digital skills for teaching staff. The literature on continuing professional development for teachers in GFECs provides limited examples of CPD concerned with the use of online approaches (Orr, 2009; the 157 group, 2011).

It is arguable that college-wide SLD days and online training, promote the "training model" (Kennedy, 2005, 2014a, 2014b) as a form of CPD. According to Kennedy (2005, p. 237; 2014a, p. 338) the training model emphasises the standardisation of training, with a high degree of control that places teachers in a passive role.

Staff learning development days that are in a teacher's own vocational area of expertise are considered additional CPD requirements from those of the vocational awarding bodies. These additional CPD requirements sit well within Kennedy's (2005, 2014a, 2014b) standards-based model of CPD. The model promotes the idea that good vocational practice derives from and can be assessed through, a set of agreed variables. However, the model is largely criticised for its tendency to focus exclusively on a limited understanding of teaching, anchored in the principles of behaviourist learning (Kennedy, 2005, 2014a).

Teaching and Assessor qualifications

In 2013 the Government abolished regulations making a teaching qualification compulsory within the FE sector (Aubrey & Bell, 2015; Lucas 2013; BIS 2012a). This was coupled with the fact that budgets for teacher education and professional development had been withdrawn (BIS 2012a)**,** thus increasing a deep-seated sense of mistrust towards the government. As Lucas (2013) noted: ''This does not bode well for the proposal to leave professional qualifications to employers''. To evaluate the impact of the 2013 deregulation on GFECs and teacher CPD, a research objective was to establish whether a teaching qualification was a formal requirement to employment or part of a CPD strategy. The study participants emphasised in their responses, the need for teachers to have a formal teaching qualification. However, as Claudio, Director of Quality explained, it was not unusual for his college to recruit teachers with no teaching qualification:

> Claudio: *"Yes we have. We have the basic ... If you're in a significant teaching role you need to have a teaching qualification or if you haven't got one yet, you have to work towards one and achieve it within three years."*

As the above extract shows, continuous employment with the college is subject to the completion of a teaching qualification within the first three years. Although the participants did not mention any cases of teachers being dismissed for not having completed their teaching qualification, the participants told of how holding a teaching qualification was "an expectation" written in to their contract of employment. This legally bidding agreement between teachers and the college meant the completion of a teaching qualification, if relevant, was formally recorded and monitored by the SLT and middle managers.

The data also revealed that the colleges faced challenges in recruiting teachers with a pedagogical background. For example, Claudio went on to explain that a lot of their teachers come out of industry with no prior experience in teaching:

> Claudio: *"Because we are getting a lot of people who come out of industry or they might be a bricklayer …"*

He went on to add:

> Claudio: *"Practising but within three years they need to do this certificate and if they are in an assessing role and quite often we will require them to do the award…TAQA is it? That will be according to their roles so if the role requires it we will expect them to do it and be tied into contract."*

Claudio's account reveals the range of formal CPD placed upon teachers who work in GFECs. His use of the words 'require', 'expect' and 'tied into contract' particularly capture some of the aspects of the organisational context of teacher CPD. In order to provide a more accurate picture of the organisational context surrounding teacher CPD, and to account for the body of literature that discusses the barriers to teacher CPD in GFECs, the interviews were an opportunity to examine the barriers and facilitators to teacher participation in CPD. The interview with Claudio gave an insight into the measures the GFECs in the sample, had implemented to support teachers working towards the completion of their teaching qualification:

> Claudio: *"But we provide all the training …we give time off for new teachers or teachers who are doing their teaching qualification…we've given a time allowance so they can attend courses."*

The main feature of the support given to teachers is that the teaching qualification is delivered on-site, and teachers can take some time off for the completion of their teaching qualification. Eraut (2008) comments that the completion "of a professional qualification is an important rite of passage and an achievement of a generic competence." According to the participants, the centrality of the teaching qualification in defining the benchmark of quality related to CPD, is embedded at an institutional level through a range of policies. The completion of the teaching qualification within a 3-year period is compulsory, formally monitored, that also indicates a top-down approach to CPD.

Maths and English qualification (level 2)

A teacher's ability to demonstrate fluency in maths and English at level 2 is critical, as well as their ability to embed maths and English in *Teaching, Learning and Assessment* (TLA). This constitutes one of the core criteria within the Ofsted quality evaluation framework. The Education and Training Foundation (ETF) (n.d.) stipulate that:

> Improving outcomes in maths and English is central to success in work and life. Practitioners and providers are expected to ensure maths and English are at the heart of their teaching approach and employers require a workforce who are competently numerate and literate.

Commitment to developing teachers' abilities in maths and English at level 2 is a core component of a college's CPD. As Rob explained in his interview, having a maths and English level 2 certificate is not a pre-requisite for employment but it will be required at a later stage. Rob was very keen to stress the importance of such a requirement, and this can be seen from his choice of words that included: 'monitor', 'to make sure' and 'request'.

> Rob: *"We also monitor whether they have maths and English qualifications as well, we want to make sure that everybody is at least level 2 in maths and English so we work on that (...) and if they aren't we request them until they reach a level 2 qualification in maths and English."*

All the SLT and middle managers confirmed, teachers were required to have, or be working towards, level 2 qualifications in maths and English. The qualification was delivered on-site and arrangements for "cover" were made to enable the teachers to work towards their qualification.

Microsoft Certified Educator qualification

The Education and Training Foundation (n.d.) recognises the importance of up-to-date digital skills for both teachers and learners. What's more, a teacher's ability to demonstrate sufficient levels of digital skills is constantly evaluated in Ofsted reports. As part of the data collection process, it was felt to be important to establish a sense of what teachers' skills were like, before the '*failed*' Ofsted inspection. Participants were asked whether there had been an assessment of current teaching and learning to inform the design and content of a CPD programme appropriate to the needs of the college. The following extract is taken from Rob's interview (Vice Principal of Curriculum) and encapsulates well the tensions faced by his college after a '*failed'* Ofsted inspection:

> Rob: *"We have done a sort of base line assessment or if you like a diagnosis to see what our e-learning skills are (…) so the basic e skills which you need (…) whether it is for the tracking and monitoring of information that is displayed to the learners, whether it is their VLE (…) and we were a bit shocked how low they were (…) Too many staff were well below the ability to do what we were expected, let alone do the more advanced skills."*

In this extract, Rob reflected on teachers' digital skills up to the time of the '*failed*' inspection and acknowledged that the outcomes of the diagnosis were not satisfactory. It could be argued, in this case, that the '*failed*' inspection led to this 'diagnosis' or 'base line assessment'. As a result, there was a recognition amongst the SLT and middle managers that CPD had to go through a process of transformation to be more in-line with the actual needs of teachers.

As Rob indicated:

> Rob: *"[we] moved away from a CPD being all about the e-learning skills and we put forward hum… generally it used to be all about new initiatives and new interesting advanced skills where actually there was a big recognition … it was back to basics in a lot of cases".*

Rob's account is similar to other accounts gathered through data collection that emphasised a need for change as a result of the '*failed*' inspection. It was important for his college to "move away" from the "old ways of doing things" to address the current needs of teachers. As a means to addressing these needs, the college introduced the *Microsoft Certified Educator* (MCE) qualification which is exam-based, to certify that teachers have the "technology literacy competencies needed to provide a rich, custom learning experience for students" (Microsoft n.d). However, the introduction of a formal qualification in ICT to support the professional development of teachers was not widespread amongst the colleges within the sample.

Working towards the completion of a range of awards defines the nature of the award-bearing model in Kennedy's framework (2005; 2014a, 2014b). According to Robson (2006), formal education such as courses and conferences remain a common form of CPD in further education, although more evidence is needed to demonstrate its positive impact on teacher practice. Similarly, Hoyle (2015) indicates that formal training alone is unlikely to effect a change in practice. The author comments that: "(…) employers have recognised that using classroom courses as the sole mechanism for achieving new and complex capabilities, is bound to deliver disappointment" (Hoyle, 2015; p. 21). Kennedy (2014b, p. 693) however believes formal education, particularly at the level of a Masters qualification, can be a transformative experience and positively impact upon teacher agency.

Lesson observation

In the report titled *Six models of lesson observation: an international perspective* published in May 2018 following Ofsted's first international research seminar on lesson observation, it was noted that: "Ofsted has used lesson observation as part of the inspection process since its foundation in 1992" (Her Majesty's Chief Inspector, 2018). The role of direct observation of lessons (Ofsted 2018, p.21) is to provide some of the evidence needed to form a judgment on the quality of teaching, learning, and assessment, as well as the effectiveness of leadership and management.

However, some changes are happening. Although, lesson observation remains pivotal in the inspection process, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector (2018) observes that Ofsted's post 2005 framework shows a reduction in time available for lesson observation. In effect, a shift has occurred since 2015 that is away from graded lesson observation and this shift has been observed in a number of official documents (Her Majesty's Chief Inspector, 2018; Ofsted 2018). Today:

> (…)The scope of observation is wider as evidence from many lessons will be used to provide a reliable aggregate picture of teaching quality, moving it away from individual practitioners and towards the school as a whole (Her Majesty's Chief Inspector, 2018; p. 9).

The SLT and middle managers who took part in this study confirmed the use of graded lesson observation to judge the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. The respondents also indicated that teachers, whether new or more experienced, were observed during their lessons. Further interview questions relating to roles and responsibilities for carrying out graded lesson observation prompted the SLT and middle managers who were interviewed, to clarify that lesson observation was only carried out by more experienced senior and middle managers. The questions that dealt with the frequency of graded lesson observation revealed that the occurrence of lesson observation was the main difference in the management of that process across the different colleges.

One challenge inherent to graded lesson observation is the accuracy of judgment in grading lessons. Indeed, the process relies heavily on the judgement made by others, albeit professionals, on a teacher's performance. Comments made by the participants on this process noted there was an element of "trial and error", and the whole process was strengthened by collaboration, comparing notes and the sharing of practice in establishing a sense of accuracy in the grade. Joel, whose role was Director of Curriculum, explained the importance of getting it right:

Joel: *"You want to make sure that the grading is fair and accurate because if you are over-inflating your grades when Ofsted visits…hum…they will say actually your benchmarks are off".*

In this extract, Joel illustrates the risks associated with a grading system which lacks internal mechanisms to ensure fairness and accuracy. In another college where this issue was raised, Brian who was Head of Quality observed the following:

Brian: *"The observations of teaching and learning had been carried out by the managers in those areas and they were quite over inflated really you know when you are too familiar with your staff and know them, work with them every day it is very difficult to go in and be critical".*

Both Brian and Joel drew on their lived-experiences of grades being inflated because of some managers being over familiar with the staff they were rating. In order to conform to a set of expectations surrounding these relationships, both interviewees (who were located in two different colleges) described how the lack of impartiality prevented the teachers being observed from achieving the basic teaching standard. This lack of impartiality prevented the colleges from addressing and improving matters that related to the quality of teaching and learning. As a result of these failures, Brian and Joel both sought new ways of maintaining a level of independent scrutiny when applying their grading system. In his interview, Joel reported:

Joel: *"We are working with Ofsted inspectors to help us moderate our grades."*

In the period after the inspection, Joel and his college implemented a process of moderation, as did all the other colleges in the sample, which drew heavily on the expertise of Ofsted inspectors. According to the data, it is very common for GFECs to hire Ofsted inspectors to act as "critical friends" to take part in graded lesson observation. Ofsted inspectors bring with them the "Ofsted label" and a sense of professionalism that helps authenticate the process of moderation. It is also reassuring for colleges to have their benchmark validated by an external examiner but it also means the grades awarded to teachers are less open to re-negotiation. As part of the interview process, participants were asked questions aimed at exploring the relationship between graded lesson observation and CPD. The extract taken from Rob's interview shows lesson observation fed directly into the staff and college annual training plan, as a means to enhancing the quality of teaching and learning:

Rob: *"We have a graded lesson observation policy in the college which every year we annually grade all of the teachers so hum…a lesson just one gets graded hum...within*

that policy around about February each year …and we use the areas for improvement within those grades that we then use to create a training plan if you like for both individual people and also college wide hum…you know hum…pulling together all of the key themes of that lesson observation scheme."

Rob's account reveals an institutional perspective on the organisation and management of the teacher CPD. In effect, the term *policy* embodies the idea of a formal mechanism used to establish a culture of improvement through CPD. Figure three exemplifies the link between the areas for improvement in teaching and learning that are identified during the graded lesson observation and the annual training plan which is delivered through CPD.

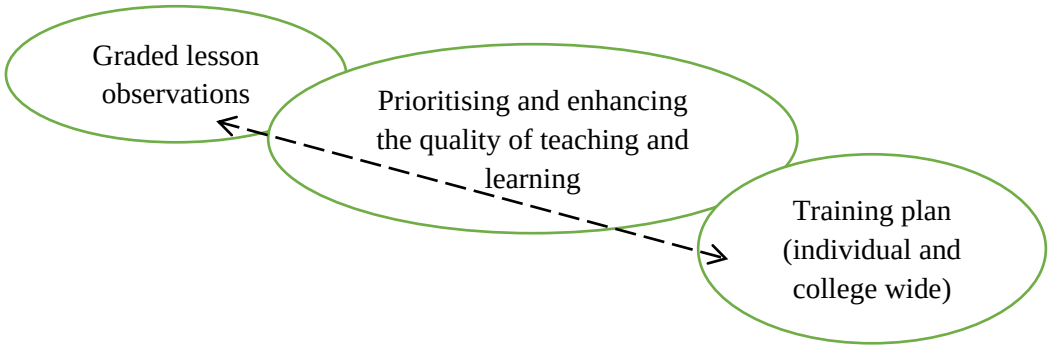


Figure 3: Continuous improvement through graded lesson observation and training plan

Analyses of the data hold that the grading system in colleges is subject to Ofsted's ripple effect. According to this view, the ripple effect goes beyond the relatively brief period of inspection (Courtney, 2012) and is designed to fit tightly with the Ofsted sanctioned ideal of quality whilst retaining the illusion of freedom (Ball, 2003). In Courtney's view (2012, p.12) this phenomenon ''fits a larger pattern of standardisation''. The interview questions used for this study, were designed to uncover the extent to which colleges follow a prescribed approach to teaching, and whether teachers were encouraged to innovate and take risks.

In the following two quotes, Brian (Head of quality) and David (Campus Director) assessed their relationship with Ofsted:

Brian: *"I think we do... We are a bit slavish in terms of Ofsted aren't we?"*

David: *"We keep reinforcing the methods and well before the inspection we keep revisiting the topics."*

The evidence indicates that a teacher's practice is governed by internally held assumptions about "Ofsted's way of doing things". These are revealing exchanges because

they illustrate how Ball (2003) and Courtney's (2012) notion of a standardised approach to teaching and learning, fits in the context of GFECs, and how that notion can impede the nature of the CPD delivered in colleges. That said, it needs to be borne in mind that Ofsted does not prescribe any particular way of teaching (CIF, 2015).

Exploring the intent of graded lesson observation through Kennedy's (2005, 2014a, 2014b) framework of CPD, it can be argued that graded lesson observation rests on the premise of the deficit model which intends to "(…) address a perceived deficit in teacher performance" (Kennedy, 2005, p. 239). The SLT, middle managers and occasionally Ofsted inspectors, in their role as critical friends, observe and evaluate teacher performance in accordance with the national benchmarks that define quality of teaching and learning. Perceived weaknesses are identified in the feedback and addressed through the individual, and college annual training plan. In a nutshell, the hard approach to teacher CPD is driven by the SLT and middle managers and the emphasis is on the measurement of performance. This approach includes *staff learning development days*, graded lesson observation as well as formal education.

The second approach identified to teacher CPD is *developmental* and is orientated towards individual growth. According to the participants, one result of a '*failed'* Ofsted inspection was the inclusion of a developmental form of teacher CPD for improving the quality of teaching and learning and was responsible for leading the CPD through a process of change. In the account provided by Michele, she tells of how the CPD in her college is slowly shifting from "SLD days" to a developmental approach:

> Michele: *"We've got 10 mandatory days (…) but we used to have up to 15 days. We are reducing the number of SLD days and increasing developmental opportunities…."*

Michele's statement evaluates the change in their CPD strategy from the time of the '*failed*' inspection to post reinspection. She implicitly recognises the benefits of developmental opportunities over a more formal approach.

Non-graded lesson observation

Recent Ofsted policy reforms have paved the way for a shift away from graded lesson observation since 2015. As a result, GFECs have followed in Ofsted's footsteps and implemented non-graded lesson observation to improve the quality of teaching and learning, that includes teachers' performance in the classroom. Brian (Head of quality), explains the shift towards non-graded lesson observation at his college was recent but well under way, and he stressed the objective was developmental:

Brian: *"We've recently moved away from grading teaching learning we're doing more a non-graded approach with a view to becoming more developmental in another year. Yeah this year we're doing a bit of an in-between house between grading and totally non-graded. This year we're just giving a progress measure. And if there are concerns we get those concerns and they have to engage but we're seeing people engage really well anyway and so we're hoping another year to remove that and go totally developmental."*

However, unlike Ofsted which has now completely moved away from the grading approach, data from the one-to-one interviews and group interviews with the SLT and middle managers, across the colleges showed most GFECs rely on "an in-between house - between grading and totally non-graded" approach to lesson observation.

One key characteristic in which the data showed some differences in practice was the occurrence of non-graded lesson observation across the colleges. Brian, who is Head of Quality, indicated that some teachers had to take part in more non-graded lesson observation than others:

Brian: *"(…) could get seen 15 to 20 times a year…Yeah (laughs) (…) and some [observations] will be 15 to 20 minutes."*

The above account by Brian echoed a similar practice at another college where Rob worked as Vice-Principal of Curriculum. Rob's viewpoint was interesting in the sense that he had lived the pre and post Ofsted inspection that effectively saw the college move from an Ofsted grade of three to two. Rob explained that his college successfully implemented non-graded lesson observation to support all teachers, but in contrast to Brian, Rob noted in the interview, that the process is compulsory for all teachers whether 'old' or 'new':

Rob: *"(…) we have a thing called PPVs which stands for Professional Practice Visits and every 6 weeks we go into the classrooms hum… the manager goes to the classrooms and observes what's going on and gives feedback…written feedback just on the areas to improve and the things that didn't go well and any issues that came out. So in that 6 week cycle there is a continuous improvement plan for the individuals but they are not graded so hum…they are just about development and having a professional conversation with your manager and about your professional practice and that is the whole idea really…so it's constant improvement. If there is something really significant that could trigger an observation…hum…a graded observation …something really poor …but ultimately they are about development and improvement rather than grading so that's the process we use through the year."*

Rob's comments were important in outlining the need to have a personalised and individualised approach to improving teaching and learning through CPD. This was reflected in the notion of "improvement plan for the individuals" rather than the college. In addition to this, Rob reflected on the notion of "continuous improvement" and how this was embedded in

their CPD practice. The *Professional Practice Visits* or PPVs were thus designed to fit a 6-week cyclical routine throughout the year.

An individualised approach was also evidenced in teachers receiving written feedback on areas for development soon after the observation. Beard and Wislon (2013) comment that providing prompt feedback is a more successful means of behavioural change. Reid and Barrington (1999) building on the work of Skinner (as cited in Reid and Barrington, 1999; p. 61) also refer to reinforcement theories, and particularly the conditioning and shaping of behaviour. They explain that feedback can become a source of positive reinforcement and a form of reward and learning for individuals.

Brian and Rob in their interviews both referred to possible "concerns" identified during non-graded observation, and indicated these were addressed through a graded-observation. It could be argued that this form of reasoning, implies the measurement of performance remains the only quality benchmark colleges trust.

Data from the interviews indicated that the process of non-graded lesson observation essentially remains the same across the colleges even though the names and the frequency tend to vary. In effect, the SLT and middle managers described non-graded lesson observation as being first and foremost centred on the needs of the teachers, and all regarded it as non-judgemental and developmental. The interviews and comments from the SLT and middle managers also revealed that the process was designed to feel "informal" and involved staff who already knew each other and shared a degree of familiarity. The arrangement most commonly used meant that a line manager or, in some cases, a named Advanced Practitioner worked with a designated group of teachers in an informal, less hierarchal and developmental way. The following comments by Mishal (Director of Quality and Staff Development) and John (Director of Quality and Staff Development) embody the notion of pairing, and capture well the difference between a graded and non-graded lesson observation that is based on the idea of support for the individual:

> Mishal: *"[They] find us to be very supportive because it's done in a supportive developmental way".*

> John: *"The team who are observing them they are not senior managers hummm... the APs are the lecturers who spend half a week observing so they're quite non-threatening they should feel like they're working with them on things that they definitely know they are good at they know they're really good teachers".*

The colleges' strategy for developing more forms of collaborative CPD was exemplified in their recent introduction of non-graded lesson observation. From the initial answers given by the respondents, it was not clear whether a more developmental approach to staff development led to more innovative teaching and learning methods. With this in mind, additional questions were asked during the interviews with the SLT and middle managers, to

uncover whether there were some indications that this approach had a greater impact on a teacher's teaching and learning practice. Although there was a sense amongst the respondents that Ofsted actually encourages and supports the notion of taking risks and being more innovative to improve the quality of teaching and learning, the colleges appeared to be in an conundrum as what do to with "the old way of doing things". This dichotomy between the top-down approach, encapsulated in the Ofsted way and the developmental way, is well illustrated in the following two comments:

> Colin: *"(…) we are encouraged to be innovative...you know take some risks … try something different and have a professional discussion with the AP or your manager you know…it is not graded"* (Director of Quality and Staff Development).

> Rosie: *"We do try and balance that… But when push comes to shove when Ofsted are coming in (laughs) we do work to Ofsted's expectations in terms of what they would expect to see in good teaching and learning"* (Vice-Principal, Curriculum).

Data gathered through the interviews showed that several respondents spoke about trying to achieve a balance between autonomy and compliance in their approach to teaching but more evidence needs to be produced. The need to take risks in teaching resonates well in the literature. Forest (2015, p. 297), argues that "the need to take risks and innovate is essential for the improvement of professional practice". However, reflecting on the relationship between innovation and the Ofsted inspection framework, Foster (2015, p. 309) suggests the framework was certainly seen as constraining the improvement of some activities.

The colleges were committed to developing more informal and supportive and collaborative ways of working. With teachers playing an active role in non-graded lesson observation, this was seen as an important part in raising teachers' performance and increasing their engagement. Certainly, peer observation, as a form of CPD, had a positive impact and helped prioritise needs, and improve the quality of teaching at the individual teacher level. Gosling and Mason O'Connor (2009) define peer observation as a mechanism for learning, and argue that "peer observation is effective and can support professional learning where it is part of a genuine peer-led dialogue". As the comments below illustrate, there was evidence of a peer-led dialogue operating in the colleges and this was reported in the data. Rosie and Brian both explained how peer observation works in practice:

> Rosie: *"They do a lot of people peer work as well, so part of working with staff is actually letting them see really good teaching going in with an AP [Advanced practitioner] watching them teach".*

> Brian: *"Then we've started doing quite a lot of accompanied peer observations that they (APs) might take that person to see someone who is really good at that and sit with them and talk to them about what they're saying... but rather than just send them to look, sit with them and say "see what they're doing now" (whispering voice) and*

because a person who is not a very confident teacher won't spot it unless it is pointed out".

The process of engaging teachers in a peer-led dialogue hinges on the use of professional teachers commonly named as *Advanced Practitioners* (APs). Previous research indicates *Advanced Skills Teachers* (ASTs) appeared for the first time in 1998 in England and Wales (Forde et al., 2009), although conventionally APs have been used in various guises across the FE sector (ETS, 2017). The introduction of APs was intended to solve different issues. Faced with the challenges of keeping the most competent workforce, colleges can offer the best teachers' opportunities for career progression (Forde et al., 2009). In their role as AP, they are able to disseminate their "know-how" into learning and teaching (Forde et al., 2009). The literature argues that in the case of Advanced Skills Teachers they "represent the traditional cascading of CPD in a new format and, in a climate of performativity, a cheaper but potentially more efficient and effective option than providing specific CPD opportunities for all teachers" (Forde et al., 2009, p. 131).

It was these views which set the backdrop for an exploratory study by the Institute for Employment Studies in 2017, which investigated how Further Education (FE) providers use advanced practitioner-type roles to improve teaching and learning, particularly as APs are widely regarded as "outstanding" teachers (ETS, 2017). And as the SLT and middle managers recruited into the study explained, a key characteristic inherent to the role of an AP, is to constantly remain outstanding. It is common practice for "APs [to] help teaching staff to trial new TLA strategies, share good practice and support wider development, such as staff inductions and strategic planning" (ETS, 2017). These views are supported by research conducted by Forde et al. (2009, p. 135) on the positive role of APs in teacher professional development in FE, but particularly: "(…) in all three-core measurements of CPD including - reviewing practice, acquiring new skills and knowledge, sharing good practice and experience with colleagues and new entrants to the profession."

Through the interviews, the SLT and middle managers indicated they had always had APs as a resource to support and improve the quality of teaching and learning. However, taking into account the past poor performance of the colleges, the SLT and middle managers interviewed, revealed that in some cases, APs had not been contributing enough towards the improvement of teaching and learning. According to David, Campus Director, a redeployment of existing APs was needed at his college to make support more efficient:

David: *"(...) because we'd had we'd always had advanced practitioners so I think the one thing that's quite important is we haven't put any more resources into it. We've just redeployed our staff in a different way so it hasn't cost us anymore"*.

Excellence programme

The *Excellence Programme* is a CPD programme designed to cater for the needs of teachers who have been known to be "good" for several years. The scheme is unique in the sense that it specifically focuses on the developmental needs of more advanced teachers who want to move from *Good* to *Outstanding*. As indicated in the two statements below that were derived from the interviews, there was evidence that such CPD activities were implemented across the sample of colleges, although sometimes labelled under a different name:

> Rob: *"We have a programme called the Excellence Programme which is all about staff who've been good euh ... on a good observation for a number of years to bring them up to 'Outstanding' so we've running that programme for a good three or four years now which has been very effective at lifting from good to outstanding for teachers"*.

> *Rosie: "Brian developed groups like the 'Journey to Outstanding Group', so for strong practitioners to come together so not just working with the weaker ones but working with the stronger ones as well to help them reflect, develop their practice and that sort of thing".*

The Excellence Programme and Journey to Outstanding are also examples of core CPD activities which help improve the quality of teaching and learning. The approach chosen is non-judgmental, and developmental focussed, and it hinges on peer coaching. CPD is underpinned by the principle of consolidating teaching practice at an individual level through a series of non-graded lesson observation and feedback. In the section that follows, I will attempt to clarify the concept of coaching and illustrate how coaching is carried out within the teaching context of the providers interviewed for this study.

Coaching

Clutterbuck (1998) identifies the origins of coaching as in the skills required to handle a team of horses attached to a stagecoach. Writing about coaching, Reid and Barrington (1999) comment that coaching is one of the most valuable methods of management development. Their view focuses on coaching done by a line manager and is broadened by other works such as those of Beard and Wislon (2013, p. 64) who describe coaching "(…) as being designed to bring about a desired outcome focusing on a joint agreement about behaviour, motivation and commitment". In their view, coaching is potentially the most common approach to learning and development in workplaces.

Beard and Wislon (2013) also explain that coaching tends to be used as a tool for improving performance that is directed at enhancing specific skills. This is confirmed in

previous work by Reid and Barrington (1999) who convey the same idea and who explain that through this process the individual becomes more aware of, and seizes, the learning opportunities that occur in a workplace situation. Similarly, the definition by the Chartered Institute of Professional development (CIPD) (n.d.) draws principally on the idea of increasing and improving work performance, and better social interaction and confidence. Reid and Barrington (1999, p. 227) explain the role of the coach as follows:

> The coach helps the trainee (or sometimes group of trainees) to assess his [or her] own performance, realise his [or her] own shortcomings and identify his [or her] own learning needs, develop and carry out a learning/action plan, reassess his [or her] competence and constantly review progress.

In line with the purpose of this study, Joyce and Showers (as cited in Browne, Kelly, and Sargent, 2008) comment that coaching is the method which impacts the most on teaching and learning when it is developed and grown from within the organisation itself and not from external CPD events. The data generated for the purposes of this study, illustrate how coaching is carried out within the context of teaching in a particular college, and how a teacher's coaching is the responsibility of his or her line manager or an Advanced practitioner (AP). Ana, who is Principal and Chief Executive of one of the colleges in the study, explained how coaching was developed within the context of her college:

> Ana: "If an AP [Advanced Practitioner] seen someone teach then they invite them to come talk through the session and how they could have tackled things differently and what impact that might have had".

As this comment illustrates, coaching involves having a professional conversation which identifies areas for development and at the same time challenges adopted routines. For Brown (2006, p. 34) it is important that coaching and the role of the coach, recognise the importance of discussions being carried out in a supportive and non-judgemental environment and that there are support mechanisms for a successful peer coaching relationship, that routinely includes trust from both sides and a "no blame" culture. These same characteristics are noted by Kennedy (2005) in her work, who also addresses the coaching model of CPD. Brown (2006, p. 34) in considering why peer coaching is highly suitable for dual professional teachers concludes: "A peer coaching relationship enables and indeed encourages a co-learning approach, where each draws on the skills of the other". Brown's viewpoint concurs with Kennedy's (2005) who stresses the importance of a one-to-one relationship around which continuing professional development is built: Kennedy also accepts the conclusion that co-learning can occur through shared dialogue within the workplace. The data generated from the interviews, support both Brown (2006) and Kennedy's (2005) viewpoint, with one-to-one

coaching regarded as far more effective at improving and developing teaching and learning. It was a view that was endorsed by Rob:

> Rob: *"I think there is a large range of different methods of improvement and of course depending on what is needed but certainly what is very clear if you want to get to outstanding … the really … the only one that is effective is coaching … support … direct one-to-one coaching … support … that is the only thing that gets people there and certainly not the group training. It's good and helpful and does … but group training won't get you to outstanding from our experience".*

It is arguable, that non-graded lesson observation and the Excellence Programme also adopt the principles of the coaching model as explained by Kennedy (2005, 2014a, 2014b). In Kennedy's view, the coaching model recognises the importance of the one-to-one relationship in improving professional learning by sharing dialogue with colleagues in a less hierarchically, and threatening manner (Kennedy, 2014a, p.344).

Conclusion

Using Kennedy's (2005, 2014a, 2014b) frameworks of CPD models as a lens to examining the configuration of teacher CPD in GFECs, this chapter has explored the view that there are essentially five models of continuing professional development currently in use including: the training model, award-bearing model, deficit model, standards-based model and the coaching model. These five models are further explored in Figure five.

It has been argued here there are two distinct approaches routinely adopted by GFECs to improve teaching and learning following an Ofsted inspection resulting in an 'inadequate' or "requires improvement" grading. These two approaches are managed through the mechanism of continuing professional development as GFECs seek to improve their disappointing Ofsted rating to "good" or above. The first of these distinct approaches is a series of formal CPD activities; these include SLD days which are organised on-site in colleges and in conjunction with industry, and also through graded lesson observation that are essentially led by the SLT and middle managers: the provision of a range of training courses is also part of this approach. At college level, this approach emphasises the implementation and monitoring of key performance indicators and the measurement of teachers' performance in the classrooms. The underpinning principles which guide this form of teacher development are generally seen as the embodiment of the managerialism and performativity agenda. Described as being judgmental, the approach relies on a small team of senior and middle managers who drive and design the CPD with limited input from teachers. They often collaborate with Ofsted inspectors to improve and validate internal grading systems. The grades and feedback given to teachers during graded lesson observation feed into the colleges'

strategy for improving teaching and learning. Teachers who continuously fail to achieve "good" or better, are at risk of losing their job.

The second approach is based on non-graded CPD activities such as lesson observation, PPVs and learning walks but also peer coaching. A specific CPD initiative like the Excellence Programme, caters for the needs of teachers who have continuously achieved 'good' or better to support them in their journey to 'outstanding'. In this instance, the CPD is designed to feel less formal with a no-blame culture, and is focused on individual development rather than the measurement of teacher performance against KPIs. Underlying the non-graded approach, there is a construction of teacher continuing professional development that is based upon swift feedback, coaching and a no-blame culture. What this study has revealed is that most GFECs have adopted a hybrid approach to teacher CPD, that relies on both performance measurement and individual development: it also emerged that very few colleges have dropped graded lesson observation in favour of more developmental CPD activities.

In discussing various continuing professional development activities that have been outlined above, the activities have been grouped according to their underpinning approaches (formal approach vs. developmental approach) and this is shown in Table six. Drawing on the evidence generated from the various interviews, Figure four illustrates the conceptual underpinning of quality and how quality improvement of teaching and learning is made through lesson observation. Figure six demonstrates how the current configuration of teacher CPD in GFECs is construed as a means to improving an Ofsted inspection grade from "inadequate" or "requires improvement" to a grade of "good". This has been illustrated using Kennedy's (2005, 20014a, 2014b) frameworks of CPD models as a lens. Figure six outlines how the management of teacher CPD in GFECs hinges on compliance and autonomy as well as the crucial aspect of continuous improvement. This is further expounded in Figure seven as it details the contribution of CPD towards teacher professional autonomy when intentionally aimed at improving an Ofsted inspection to a grade of good.

Table 6: Summary of CPD activities in GFECs when intentionally aiming to improve Ofsted inspection from an ‘inadequate’ or ‘requires improvement’ grading to ‘good’.

	Formal approach			**Developmental approach**	
Top-down	**Staff Learning Development Days**	**Graded**	**Formal education**	**Non-graded**	**Coaching**
	Colleges	Lesson observations	Teaching qualification	Lesson observations	
	Industry (Awarding bodies)	Performance reviews	Maths & English level 2	PPVs	
			Microsoft Certified Educator qualification	Learning walks	
				Excellence programme	

Figure 4: Conceptual underpinning of quality and quality improvement of teaching and learning through lesson observation

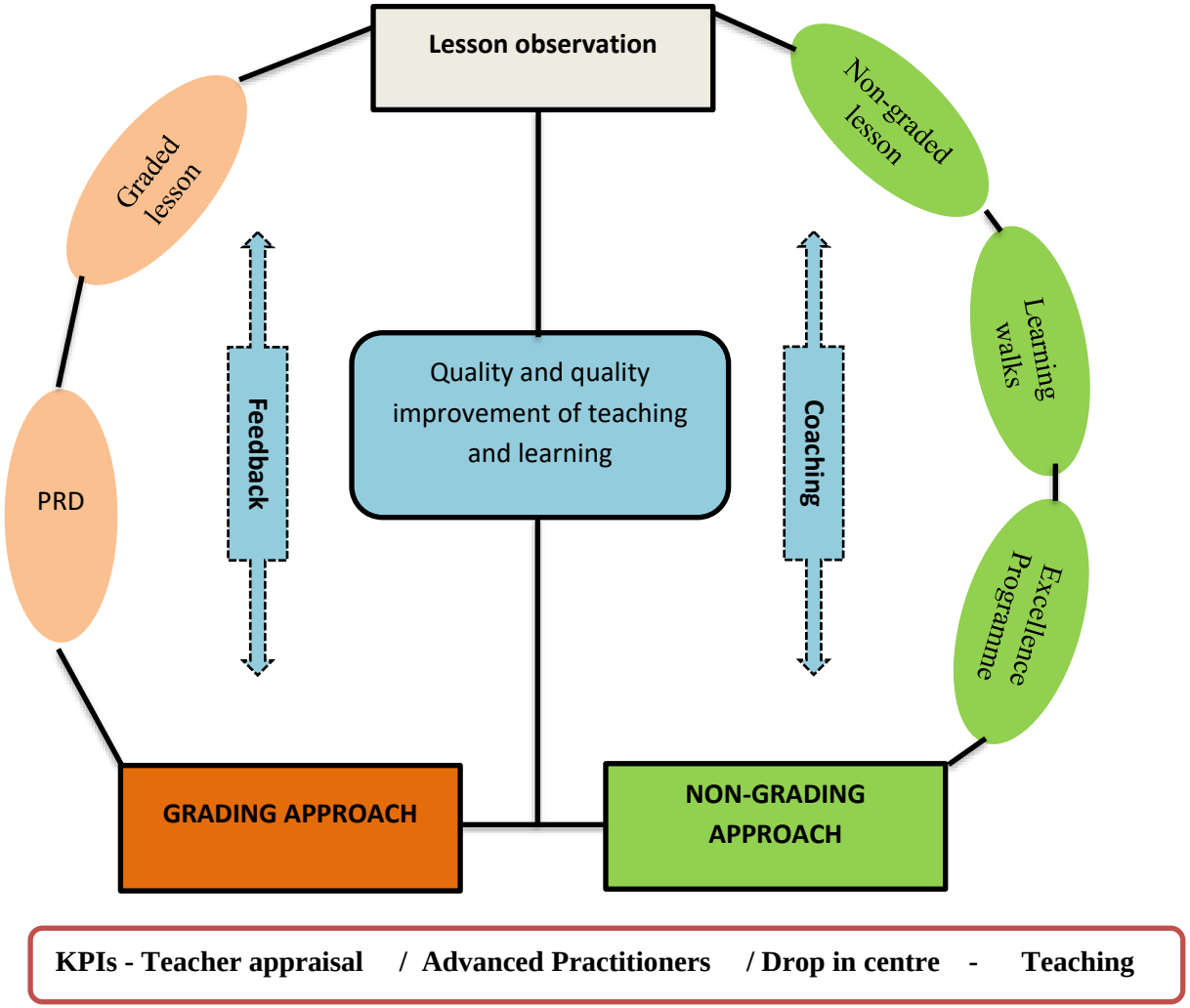
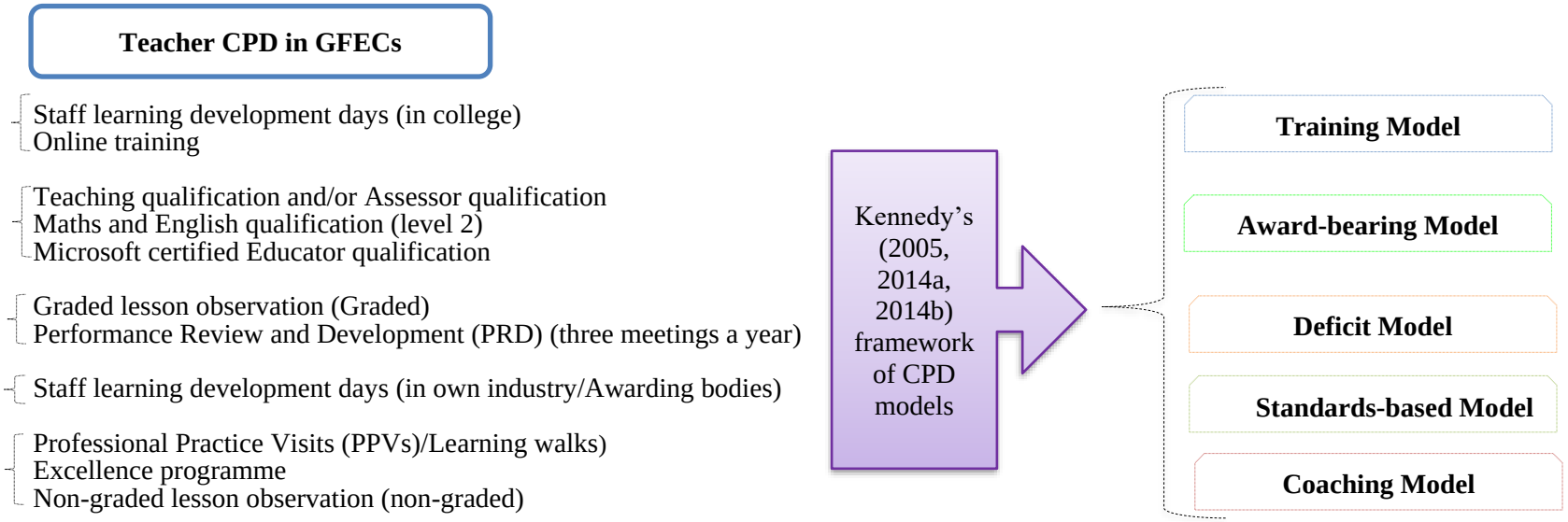
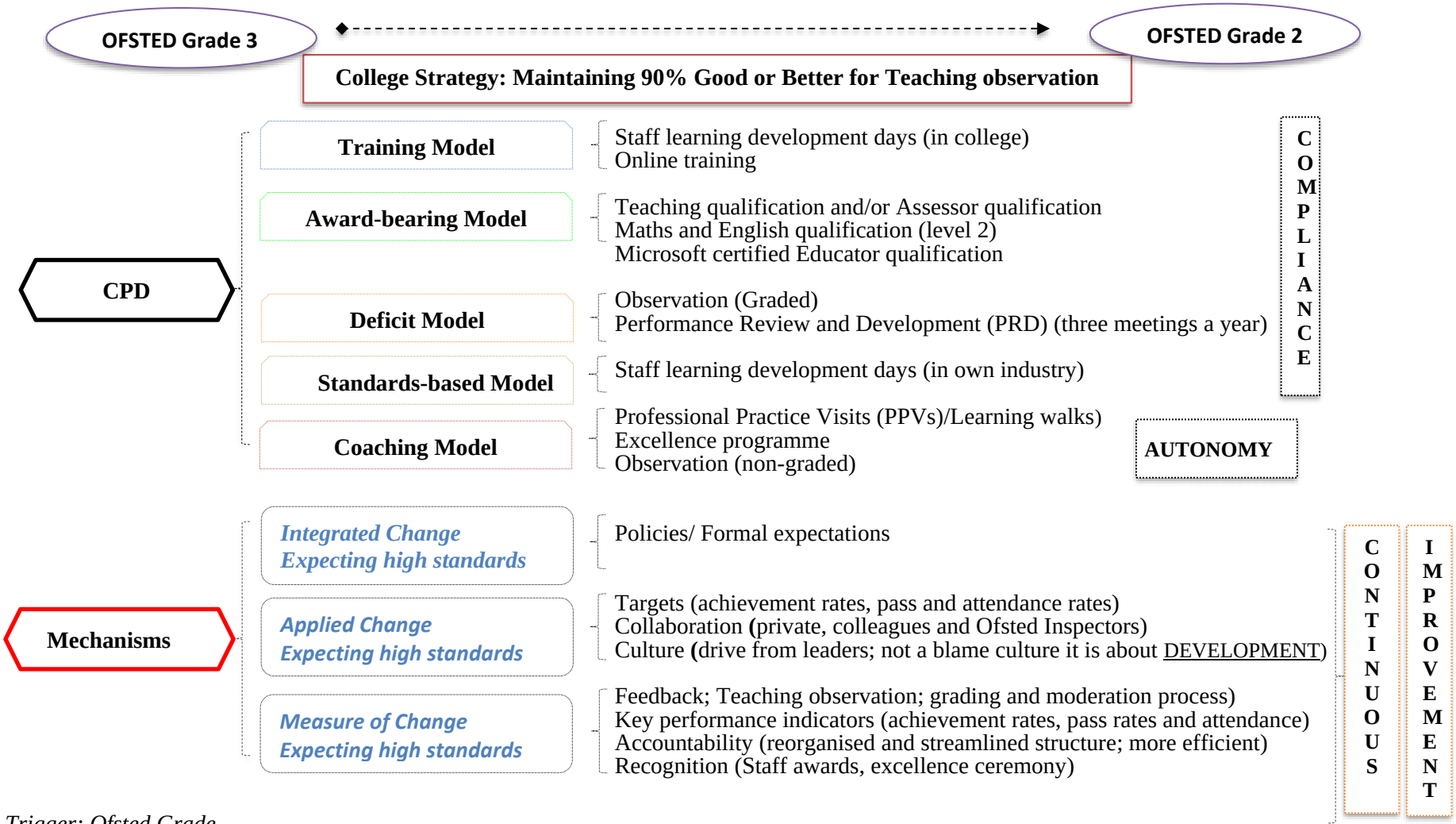


Figure 5: Using Kennedy's (2005, 2014a, 2014b) frameworks as lens to examine the configuration of the teacher CPD in GFECs when intentionally aiming to improve Ofsted inspection from an 'inadequate' or requires improvement grading to 'good'

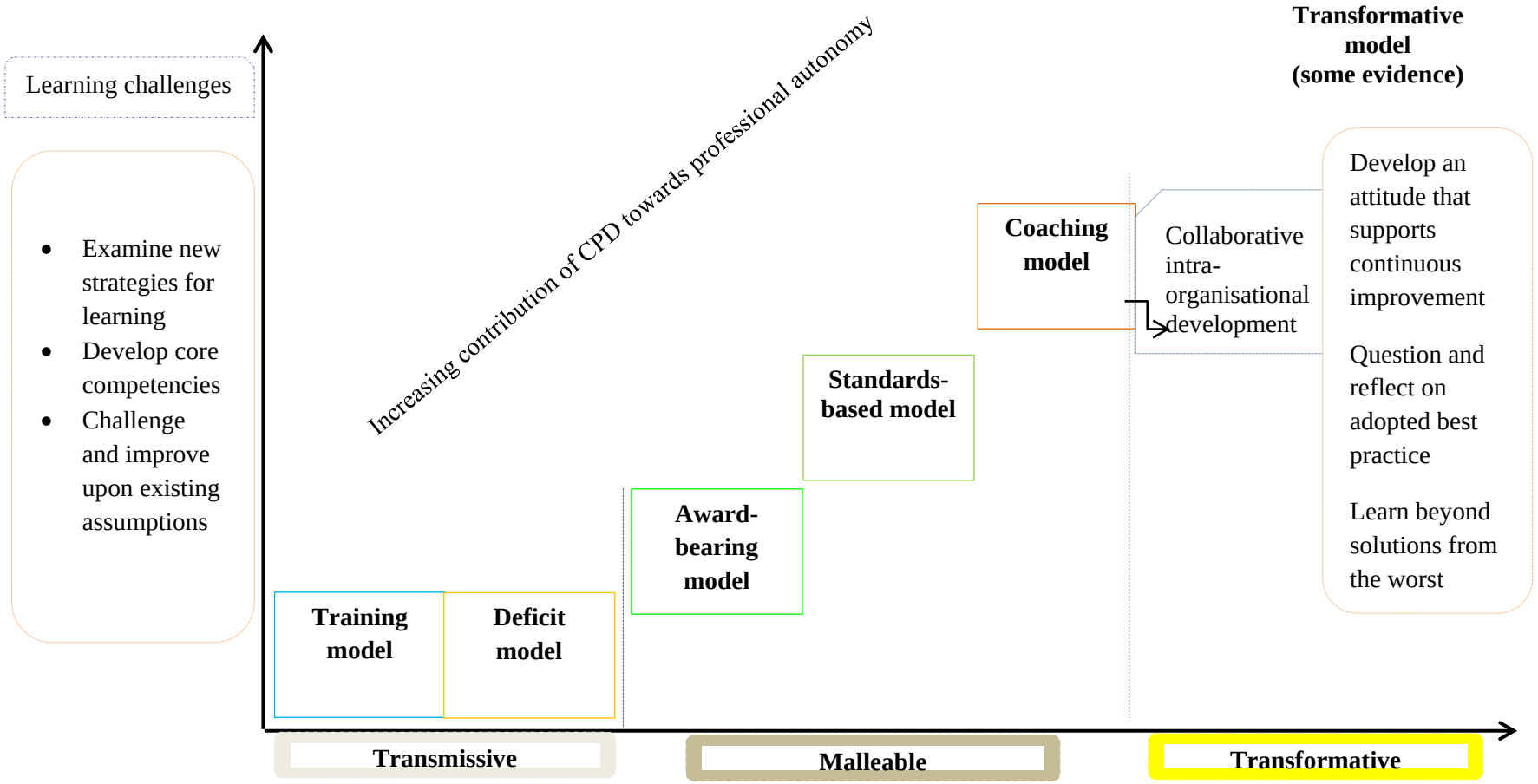




Trigger: Ofsted Grade
Starting point: Overall college strategy
Expectations: Policies (embedded at institutional level)
Drivers: Observation profile (Areas for improvement lead to what the development needs are)

Figure 6: Management of teacher CPD in GFECs when intentionally aiming to improve Ofsted inspection from an 'inadequate' or 'requires Improvement' grading to 'good'

Figure 7: Contribution of CPD towards teacher professional autonomy when intentionally aiming to improve Ofsted inspection from an 'inadequate' or 'requires improvement' grading to 'good' (Adapted from Kennedy, 2014b)



Chapter Five

Conclusions and recommendations

The main ambition of this study was to critically review the management of teacher continuing professional development (CPD) in General Further Education Colleges (GFECs) in England, when intentionally aiming to improve the results of an Ofsted inspection from an "inadequate" or "requires improvement" grading to a grading of "good". The purpose was to investigate how continuing professional development activities promote a particular model of professional practice in response to Ofsted inspections. The data for the study was gathered using semi-structured interviews and used both one-to-one and group interviews involving members of GFECs senior leadership team (SLT) and middle managers. The results were analysed using a thematic approach.

The first research objective posed for the purposes of this study was: "To critically evaluate the appropriateness and efficiency of existing continuing professional development activities aimed at improving teaching and learning following an Ofsted inspection." The findings demonstrated that continuing professional development (CPD) opportunities are various but predominantly aimed at improving pedagogic skills. Teachers regarded as dual practitioners are expected to improve and update their vocational skills through other CPD means. The provision of an in-house teacher training course in all the GFECs studied was a central component of CPD opportunities leading to certification that benefitted non-qualified teachers. According to the data, the decision taken by the Government in 2013 to abolish regulations making a teaching qualification compulsory within the FE sector, has not led to the 'deprofessionalisation' of the teaching workforce in the sector.

A framework for analysis of CPD models has been developed by Aileen Kennedy (2005; 2014a; 2014b) and it is Kennedy's work in this area that has informed the approach to the current study. Borrowing from Kennedy's work, the study developed a framework for analysis through which CPD activities that were developed in response to a negative Ofsted inspection could be analysed. Examining the configuration of teacher CPD in the 11 GFECs who participated in the research (Figure six) the study identified and explored five models of continuing professional development including: training, award-bearing, deficit, standards-based and coaching. The five models of CPD identified from the research data fell into two different approaches that were either *top-down* or *developmental*. As Table 6 demonstrates, the top-down approach included staff learning and development (SLD) days (training model), graded lesson observation (deficit model) and formal courses (award-bearing model). From the top-down approaches identified, it was clear teacher continuing professional development underlined the priorities of the eleven colleges recruited into the sample. This meant that the

mechanisms by which teachers could be involved in the design of CPD activities was limited to informal discussions with their line manager or through staff appraisals.

However, the data also demonstrated that teacher professional development operated a developmental approach that was grounded in non-graded lesson observation, professional practice visits (PPVs), learning walks and coaching. In the case of more advanced teachers, particularly those who were consistently rated "good" these teachers benefited from their own CPD activities called *the excellence programme*, the principles of which were anchored in coaching.

The study also showed that quality, and quality improvement of teaching and learning in GFECs, was achieved through rigorous monitoring (mechanisms in Figure six) and a continuous feeding process between the outcomes of CPD and the training plan designed at college level.

Analyses of the five CPD models: a transmissive or transformative model?

Using Kennedy's (2014b) framework of CPD models as a lens to examining the configuration of teacher CPD in the eleven GFECs, Figure seven maps out the five models of continuing professional development identified. The five models operated on a continuum from transmissive to malleable. Of the five models, two were clearly transmissive and included the *training model* (SLD days in colleges), and the *deficit model* (graded lesson observation). Of the remaining models identified, the award-bearing model (teacher training qualification, assessor qualification, and Microsoft Certified Educator qualification), the standards-based model (SLD days in industry) and the coaching model, all emphasised a more malleable purpose to CPD activities.

Arguably, some aspects of the coaching model, particularly the CPD activities that included an element of collaborative intra-organisational development such as peer review, could be regarded as transformative, although this was not assessed from the teachers' perspective.

As shown in Figure seven, the purpose of the five models was mainly to support teachers in developing core competencies, examine new strategies for learning, and challenge and improve upon existing assumptions. As such, the range of CPD activities did not aim to achieve a transformative purpose using CPD, and therefore teachers were not exposed to higher levels of learning challenges.

The definition of what good teaching looks like was strongly associated with the grading of "good" or "outstanding" implied in the Ofsted quality framework. As a result, there was a strong emphasise on the type of CPD which facilitated a transmissive and malleable purpose and less emphasis on CPD as a transformative purpose. The data also revealed that

continuing professional development was predominantly aimed at achieving compliance. By comparing both the transmissive and transformative approaches, it is not implied that CPD models which fit the transmissive and malleable purpose are less or more efficient than models whose purpose is transformative. Rather, by comparing the components of both models, the study sought to understand the positioning of CPD in the sample of colleges and the purposes for which it was used.

Does CPD prioritise individual or collective development?

The five CPD models indicated the following approaches

Individual	**Collective**
Coaching	Training model
	Award-bearing model
	Deficit model
	Standards-based model

According to the data, the range of CPD activities on offer in the eleven colleges suggested both individual and collective teacher development, were included in CPD activities. Coaching, particularly one-to-one coaching, was seen as the more efficient CPD approach to improving teaching and learning. However, this study did not demonstrate whether one-to-one coaching was used for compliance or innovation.

Contribution of resources, roles and responsibilities in delivering CPD activities

The responses from the SLT and middle managers interviewed, suggested that although financial resources allocated to CPD activities were limited, this did not constitute a barrier to teacher development activities. Nonetheless, some colleges invested a lot more resources in CPD to include dedicated facilities such as a *Teaching Hub* to act as drop-in centre for teachers.

At the college level, a small team of SLT, middle managers and advanced practitioners (APs) assumed leadership roles in different areas linked to CPD activities. These included: lesson observation, coaching, monitoring performance across the college, designing policies including the teaching and learning strategy, and a range of other CPD activities. Research evidence also indicated the centrality of the role of Advanced Practitioners in developing teaching practice for both beginner and more experienced teachers, particularly through one-to-one coaching. A further key resource in establishing a reliable grading and moderation

system, is the Ofsted inspectors who are often hired by the SLT to act as “critical friends”. At the heart of this collaboration with external partners is the need to establish a sense of accuracy in the internal grading process and develop benchmarks to work towards.

The data also suggested that funding cuts along with a poor Ofsted grading, led some GFECs to adopt a flatter organisational structure by removing a layer of middle managers. This change in resource made managers in curriculum areas more accountable to SLT and had the advantage of making CPD activities more aligned to teachers’ needs.

Formulating a framework to analyse CPD activities

The framework suggested in Figure 6 aimed to provide an in-depth and critical examination of the five CPD models identified in the study and to consider the underpinning influences of the CPD activities adopted as whole. The study found that colleges who demonstrated a commitment to developing better focused CPD resulted from the SLT’s decision to introduce a series of mechanisms to monitor and ensure continuous improvement in teacher performance, and teaching and learning. As a result of these mechanisms, the need for change in the direction of higher standards was encapsulated at a college wide level through the adoption of relevant policies and the development of CPD models combining both compliance and autonomy (Figure six). These mechanisms were implemented at the college level and helped ensure the policies promoting change were embedded throughout the college in order to ensure a culture of change that promoted stronger accountability and the achievement of higher standards through compliance and autonomy. The latter concept of autonomy focused on a developmental approach to CPD through the adoption of a “no blame culture”. The change in culture, was more profound in some colleges than others, and contributed positively to the removal of a “deep sense of shame” that teachers felt as a result of “working with APs” in order to improve teaching and quality.

The framework (Figure six) developed by this study is intended to be of use in similar FE colleges wanting to critically review their teacher continuing professional development provision and to suggest mechanisms to ensure continuous improvement. The framework is not intended to be a ‘one size fits all’ solution to improving Ofsted inspection grades but it can form the basis from which to reflect on current CPD activities and consider what mechanisms are needed to support continuous improvement in teaching and learning.

Reflections on the implications for practice

The study has made a significant original contribution to practice in many different ways. First, it has outlined how the management of CPD in GFECs aimed at improving an Ofsted inspection grade to two, consists of a synergy between four constituent elements (Figure eight): These constituent elements include:

a. The purpose of CPD: ranges on a continuum from transmissive to malleable;
b. The configuration of CPD: the range of continuing professional development activities emphasised five models of CPD;
c. The approach of CPD: reflects both a top-down and developmental approach, that results in both compliance and autonomy for the participants. CPD activities also prioritise both collective and individual development.
d. Continuous improvement: the drive from the SLT and middle managers to implement a series of mechanisms to support the achievement of 'higher standards' in teaching and learning through continuous improvement leading to a culture change.

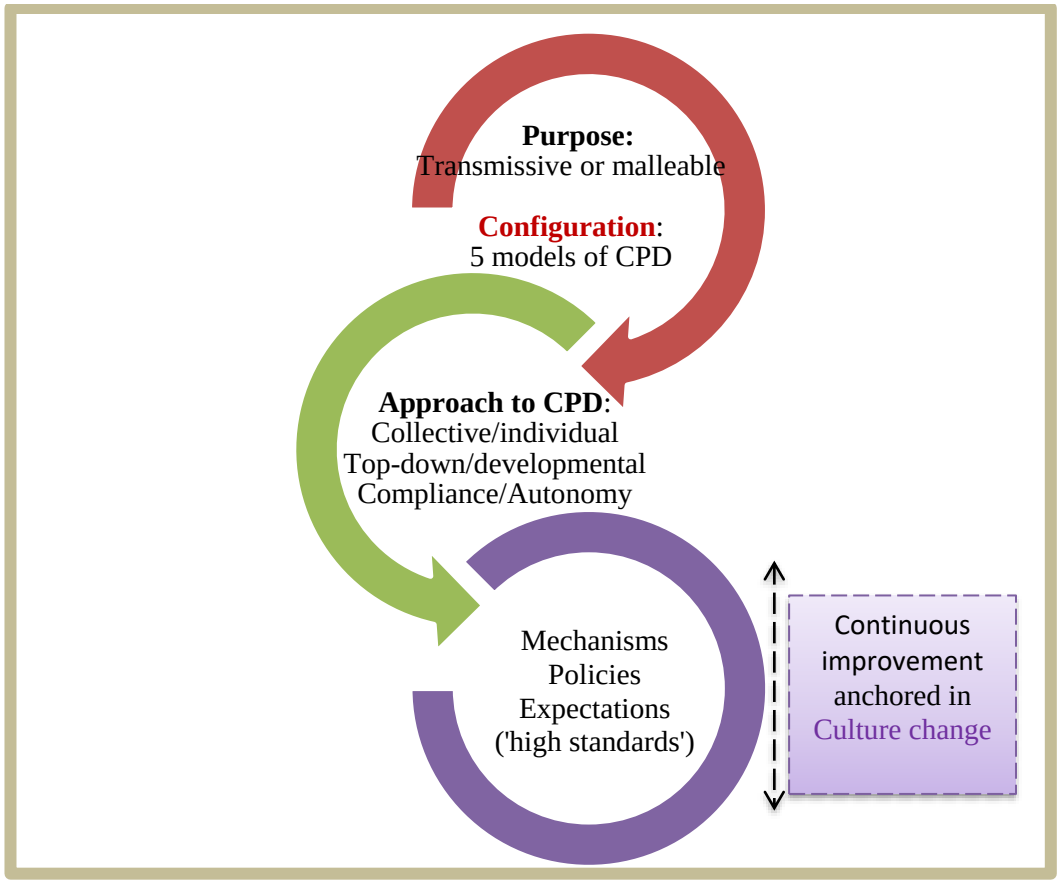


Figure 8: Contribution to practice

Of importance here is that the framework of analysis (Figure six) developed from the study, is intended to be reviewed and adapted by similar GFECs by taking into account their own teaching and learning strategy, and CPD objectives. In doing so, GFECs adopting the framework would begin by reflecting on how their overall CPD mechanisms for continuous improvement align with their current teaching and learning strategy.

Recommendations for practice

Underpinning the framework for analysis (Figure six) developed here, is the premise that a cultural change which prioritises continuous improvement in teaching and learning, is at the core of the management of CPD in GFECs. Importantly, in order to achieve the desired outcome, there is a pivotal role to be played by the SLT and middle managers in developing a culture which emphasises change at both the college and teacher level. Arguably, the required change in culture is dependent upon the approach adopted by the SLT and middle managers, who must switch to a "no blame culture" in order to encourage and motivate teachers to become more involved in their own professional development.

Limitations of the research

Methodological limitations: The current study is based on a small sample of colleges in England and does not claim to be representative of the range of GFECs across the United Kingdom. The study has focused on the college wide perspective through the views of the SLT and middle managers in the eleven colleges who described their efforts to improve their Ofsted grading. In taking this approach, the study has excluded the views of other stakeholders such as teachers and learners.

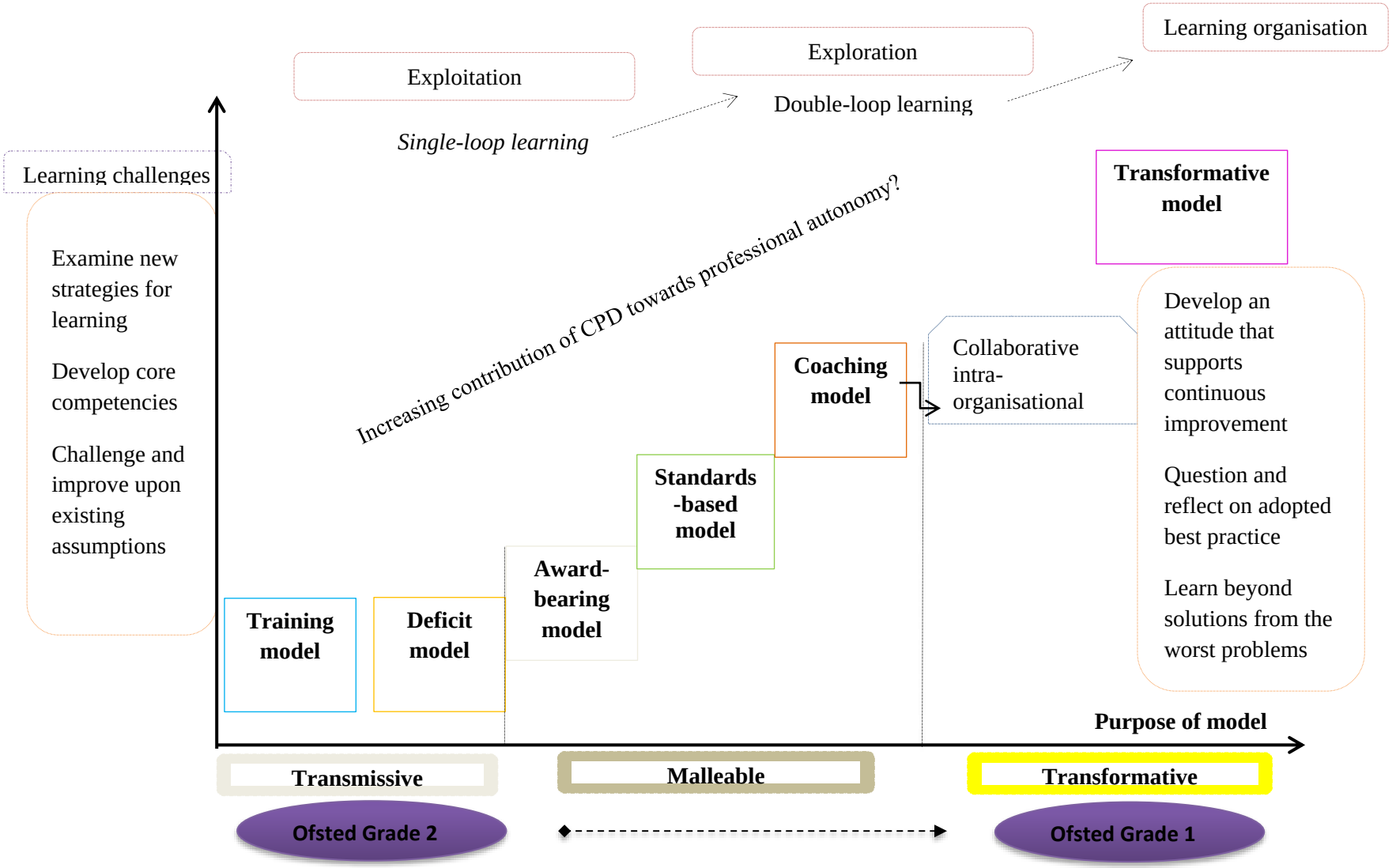
Practical challenges: The academic regulations underpinning the doctoral programme, particularly around word count, limits the range of themes presented as part of this study and the richness of the data captured through one-to-one interviews and group interviews is not fully accounted for. Other difficulties encountered during the study phase included limited financial resources and challenging time-constraints from respondents. The low level of response from colleges in London meant I had to travel further afield to gather the necessary data.

Potential for future research

Drawing on Kennedy's (2005, 2014a, 2014b) work this study has suggested a distinctive framework through which continuing professional development activities in GFECs can be analysed. Future research could test the proposed framework (Figure six) using a larger sample and with a view to examining whether different CPD initiatives emerge.

Alternatively, the current research might be enhanced by testing the proposed framework for analysis with a different sample of colleges, particularly, those who have moved from an Ofsted grade two to grade one. Doing so, might reveal the extent to which such colleges adopt the principles of a *learning organisation* as the framework in Figure nine suggests. Also, future research might want to consider the views of different stakeholders such as teachers and learners (Lucas, 2004; Simkins & Lumby, 2006), by assessing the impact of particular CPD initiatives.

Figure 9: Suggestion for future research



Reflections on research journey

Looking back over my journey as a doctoral student from the period 2013 to 2018, my journey has been filled with a range of emotions including extreme happiness, discouragement, recognition of my weaknesses and a sense of "getting there".

On the whole, I have encountered many hurdles although two seem to have been more challenging than others. To start with, the identification of a workable research topic has been more challenging than anticipated. For a while I was drawn to the notion of a rhizomatic conception of knowledge by Deleuze and Guattari which I discovered in the module *Action Learning* with Professor Stokes. Having abandoned this as a potential topic, my second attempt at identifying a workable research topic, focused on the notion of workplace learning with a particular interest in the literature by Billett (2001). Today, my initial proposal seems at odds with my current thesis although what still remains of the initial proposal is the FE sector. The second major hurdle in my research journey was the identification of clear research objectives which required a considerable amount of reading. This was probably the most challenging lesson but having overcome these hurdles, my thesis became easier to manage including finding relevant literature and presenting it.

Chapter four of the thesis discusses my research methodology in great length. At a very early stage in the research process, I made the decision to follow a qualitative approach and is a choice that still feels right at this stage. In fact, the qualitative nature of this study has provided me and also the respondents who took part in the study, with the opportunity to explore the 'lived experience' of the colleges in which they worked in greater detail. Achieving this level of detail would not have been possible had the philosophical stance adopted encompassed the principles of positivism. That said, there are limitations to the qualitative approach: interviews can generate a lot of data which might not always be possible to use and this is certainly true of this study. Generally speaking though, the respondents felt positive about the whole experience of being interviewed and put great effort into answering all of my questions and sharing their experiences. The respondents also strongly expressed the need to receive a copy of the thesis once completed.

The impact on my own practice as a manager in the field of education has also been altered as a result of carrying out this study. From doing this research, I have recognised the choice of model of CPD to be developed in a particular college context, is dependent on the skills that are needed. Crucially, I have learnt of the importance of evaluating CPD activities as whole and to form a judgment on the college's approach to CPD and to evaluate the role of policy throughout the whole process.

Conclusion

The findings from this study are intended to offer insights into the practice of CPD in the context of GFECs seeking to improve their Ofsted grading in the direction of grade two. An improved Ofsted grade is evidence that GFECs were able to implement a CPD programme that improved the quality of teaching and learning. Importantly, the CPD activities implemented for the purposes of an improved Ofsted inspection also helped to lessen the impact of workload, reduced public funding, improve upon the lack of cover for teacher engagement, and increase participation in CPD. The evidence also demonstrated teacher engagement and participation in CPD activities, is closely monitored by the senior leadership team and middle managers.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Participant Information Document

Short title of study

Improving 16-19 learners' success: the role of general colleges of further education in enhancing professional standards amongst Full-time and Part-time Teachers in the South East London region.

Dear Participant,

You are being invited to take part in a research study. Before you decide, it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully and discuss it with others if you wish. Please ask us if there is anything that is not clear or if you would like more information. Take time to decide whether or not you wish to take part. Thank you for reading this.

What is the purpose of the study?

The purpose of this study is to investigate whether CPD practices promote a particular model of professional practice with the view to allow the creation of a framework through which CPD practices can be analysed and compared.

The aim of this study will be to compare the CPD practices of a group of General Further Education Colleges in the London region which have dramatically improved the quality of their teaching, learning and assessment, effectively moving from a grade 3 (Requires improvement) or 4 (Inadequate) to a grade 2 (Good).

A written thesis will be will be produced at the end of the project. The findings from the study will be used to inform the approach (es) used to further enhance lecturers' future performance.

Why have I been chosen?
You have been chosen purposefully as one member of the group of managers with responsibility for staff development.

Do I have to take part?
It is up to you to decide whether or not to take part. If you decide to take part you will be given this information sheet to keep and be asked to sign a consent form. If you decide to take part you are still free to withdraw at any time and without giving a reason. A decision to withdraw at any time, or a decision not to take part, will not affect the standard of care you receive in any way.

What will happen to me if I take part?
If you decide to take part, you will be given this information sheet to keep and asked to sign the consent form. All discussions that take place between the researcher and yourself will be **entirely confidential**. The interviews will be conducted on your premises efficiently and with minimal disruption to both your staff and yourself.

What are the possible disadvantages and risks of taking part?
There are no disadvantages or risks foreseen in taking part in the study.

What are the possible benefits of taking part?
You will be able to reflect on CPD practices which had a positive impact on your team and, possibly, share good practice with the sector.

What if something goes wrong?
If you wish to complain or have any concerns about any aspect of the way you have been approached or treated during the course of this study, please contact:

Professor Clare Schofield
Chair of Faculty Research & Knowledge Transfer Committee
Faculty of Business & Management, University of Chester, United Kingdom, Chester CH1 4BJ
+44 (0)1244 511000 or c.schofield@chester.ac.uk

If you are harmed by taking part in this research project, there are no special compensation arrangements. If you are harmed due to someone's negligence (but not otherwise), then you may have grounds for legal action, but you may have to pay for this.

Will my taking part in the study be kept confidential?
All information which is collected about you during the course of the research will be kept strictly confidential so that only the researcher carrying out the research will have access to such information.

Participants should note that data collected from this project may be retained and published in an anonymised form. By agreeing to participate in this project, you are consenting to the retention and publication of data.

What will happen to the results of the research study?
The results will be written up into a thesis for the completion of a doctoral degree. It is hoped that the findings may be used to inform staff development-sector wide approaches and to support lecturers and as a result further enhance their professional practice. Individuals who participate will not be identified in any subsequent report or publication.

Who is organising and funding the research?
The research is funded by the researcher.

Who may I contact for further information?
If you would like more information about the research before you decide whether or not you would be willing to take part, please contact:

Wilfrid Flanda

Thank you for your interest in this research.

Appendix 2: Participant Consent Form

Title of Project: Improving 16-19 learners' success: the role of general colleges of further education
in enhancing professional standards amongst Lecturers.

Name of Researcher: Wilfrid Flanda

		Please initial box
1.	I confirm that I have read and understood the participant information sheet, dated ……., for the above study and have had the opportunity to ask questions.	☐
2.	I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time, without giving any reason and without my care or legal rights being affected.	☐
3.	I agree to take part in the above study.	☐

Name of Participant	Date	Signature
Name of Person taking consent (if different from researcher)	Date	Signature
Researcher	Date	Signature

Appendix 3: Interview Guide and Mapping with Research Objectives

Diagnosis (Before)	Strategy (The approach taken to get there)	Delivery (How was the CPD delivered?)	Measures (After)
Institutional challenges Discuss the issues the college was facing; Examine the institutional priorities Outline how CPD was diagnosed Skills, attitudes, behaviours to achieve Identify strengths and weaknesses notably relating to staff – i.e. teaching qualification?	**Did you follow a strategy and an action plan or was it haphazard?** **What strategy did you put in place to get there? What was the strategy?** discuss strategy at the institutional level and individual level **Did you set a number of targets?** Explore the nature of the targets i.e. qualifications (level, academic, professional), other? training, observation. **Are you trying to exceed the benchmark? What was the benchmark?** **Do you have a lot of autonomy?** OFSTED focused Innovation, taking risks Management vs. lecturers **Change of leadership?**	Discuss format, content, and methods Individual approach or collective approach Examine roles, responsibilities, resources, barriers, solutions and duration. Internally designed – who? External involvement in the design and delivery? Consultant, other? Joint approach in the design (management, lecturers, external bodies)	**Efficacy of the overall strategy** **What measures are there?** Quantitative (OFSTED grade; completion rates) **What has been the impact on the teaching and learning?** Qualitative (attitudes, behaviours – innovation, taking risks; student feedback) Professionalism linked to organisational (college), individual (lecturer), and learners' success. **How is it useful for the sector?**
Research objective d) To critically examine the contribution of resources, roles, and responsibilities of	Research objective d) To critically examine the contribution of resources, roles, and responsibilities of individuals and teams in their current configuration.	Research objectives b) To analyse the extent to which the fundamental purpose of the CPD to provide a means of	Research objectives a) To critically evaluate the appropriateness and efficiency of existing CPD practices aimed at improving teaching and learning.

individuals and teams in their current configuration.	e) To formulate a framework through which CPD practices can be analysed	transmission or to enable transformative practice c) To investigate, using the existing CPD configuration, whether the approach taken prioritises individual or collective development? e) To formulate a framework through which CPD practices can be analysed and compared.	e) To formulate a framework through which CPD practices can be analysed.

Appendix 4: Stage 1 list of categories and codes

Categories	Codes	Evidence	Memos	Participants
Context	Inspection	Grade 3 Grade 4	impact/leadership change of leadership	Rob, Claudio, David, Michele, Claire, john, Colin, Sarah, Mishal Rosie, Joel Rosie, Claudio, Michele
	Merger	grade 2 and grade 3	two grades (merged)	Rob, Zac
		Reorganisation rather than quality 'big dip in quality'	Organisational restructure	Rob, Michele Rob, Michele
	Outcomes for students - Retention	poor below average	pre-inspection	Rob, Ana, David, Zac, Claire, John, Colin, Sarah, Mishal Brian, Joel
	Outcomes for students - Pass rates	average	pre-inspection	Rob, Rosie, Claudio, David, Michele, Claire, John, Colin, Sarah
	Structure (Management)	(we had a) layer of management and then another layer (of programme managers)	tall organisation Bureaucratic/efficiency	Rob, Rosie, Brian, Ana, Claudio, David, Michele, Zac, Sarah, Mishal
	Accountability	there wasn't enough accountability "(…) there were too many things falling between the curriculum leader and the program leader."	No accountability Change (management)	Rosie, Brian, Ana, Claudio, David, Michele, Zac
	Complacency	Staff (from)	Leadership	Rob, Rosie, Brian

			Staff appraisals	
	Managers	too familiar (with your staff)	‘laissez faire’ Accountability (lack of) Professionalism (lack of)	Rosie, Brian
		(carried out) observations	Credibility (lack of) External judgement Critical friend (lack of) Feedback (not constructive)	Rosie, Brian, John, Colin, Sarah
		chose not to engage with AP		
	Teaching observations	Inflated (grades) didn't really understand what really it looks like	Managers/leadership Managers/leadership CPD Advanced practitioner (role)	Rob, Rosie, Brian, Ana, David, Joel, Mishal Michele, Zac, Claire, John, Colin, Sarah
	Teaching, learning and assessment	didn't really understand what was required from them	Good/Outstanding Benchmark Advanced practitioner (role)	Rob, Rosie, Brian, Ana, Claudio
	Advanced practitioners (AP)	we'd always had (them) weren't very effectively deployed we haven't put any more resources into it	Advanced practitioner (role) Managers/leadership	Rob, Rosie, Brian, Ana, David, Joel, Michele, Zac, Claire, John, Colin, Sarah, Mishal
	Staff development	another issue you can book on it if you wanted to do it and often people booked on it who didn't need to do it	Managers/leadership Participation in Continuing professional development Staff appraisal Evaluation of CPD effectiveness	Rosie, Brian Rob, Rosie, Brian, John, Colin, Sarah, Mishal
	Institutional effectiveness	we never fully achieved it was very varied some teams would engage better	Consistency (lack of)	Rob, Rosie, Brian, Ana, David, Joel, Michele, Zac, Claire, John, Colin, Sarah, Mishal

	Restructure (Management)	full (management restructure)	Layers (less) Redundancies (loss of staff)	Rob, Rosie, Brian, Ana, David, Joel, Michele, Zac, Claire, John, Colin, Sarah, Mishal
		(much) flatter structure (with less programme managers)	Reorganised and streamlined Leadership team (early retirement)	Rob, Rosie, Brian, Ana, Claudio, David, Michele, Zac, Sarah, Mishal
			Leadership team (New)	Rob, Rosie, Brian
		being really clear on what was required of them	Leadership/managers Staff	
		bringing them under one person with seniority over the programme managers made a big difference things became more consistent because the same message was happening	Managers (management of) Centralised	Rob, Rosie, Brian, Ana, Claudio, Zac, Mishal
		Programme Managers responsibility to make sure that their staff are fully engaged with the support that's available	Accountability (increased) Expectation (formal)	Rob, Rosie, Brian, Ana, Claudio, David, Joel, Michele, Zac, Claire, John, Sarah, Mishal
	Self-assessment	of the organisation	Starting point Point Zero	Rob, Rosie, Brian, Ana, Claudio, David, Joel, Michele, Claire, John, Mishal
	Policies	TLA	Institution's level Formal expectations	

Mechanisms		CPD Teaching observation Appraisal (staff)	linked to more challenging teaching and learning Compulsory/monitored Continuous	Rob, Rosie, Brian, Ana, David, Joel, Zac, Claire, John, Colin, Sarah, Mishal
	Measures	Quality improvement plan	Institution's level Driver for CPD strategy Linked to areas for improvement	Rob, Rosie, Brian, Ana, David, Joel, Michele, Zac, Claire, John, Colin, Sarah, Mishal
		Training plan	College wide Individual level Linked to quality improvement plan Focused on the needs (staff)	Rob, Rosie, Brian, Ana, David, Joel, Michele, Zac, Claire, John, Colin, Sarah, Mishal
		Teaching and Learning Hub Resource centre	Infrastructure	Rosie, Brian David, Michele, Zac, Claire, John
		Feedback	Learners (survey) Employers (survey)	Rob, Rosie, Brian, Ana, Claudio, David, Joel, Michele, Zac, Claire, John, Colin, Sarah, Mishal
		Targets • achievement rates • pass rates • attendance rates • improving the amount of outstanding teaching	Performance management-based approach Quantitative approach	Rob, Rosie, Brian, Ana, Claudio, David, Joel, Michele, Zac, Claire, John, Colin, Sarah, Mishal Rob, Rosie, Brian, Ana, Claudio, David

		• maintain 90% good or better for teaching observation profile		Rob
		Grading process	Measurement	Rob, Rosie, Brian, Ana, Claudio, David, Joel, Michele, Zac, Claire, John, Colin, Sarah, Mishal
Effectiveness	Leadership	Grade 1 Grade 2	 Institutional drive/leadership	Rob Rosie, Ana, David, Joel, Zac, Claire, John, Colin, Sarah, Mishal
	Old culture	previously people go to an AP if they were in trouble they were kind of sent to an AP	Stigma Fear of failure Taking risks (lack of)	Rosie, Brian, Ana, Joel, Michele, Zac
	New culture	"whole college push" striving for excellence in teaching and learning	Institution/ leadership	Rob, Rosie, Brian, Ana, Claudio, David, Joel, Michele, Zac, Claire, John, Colin, Sarah, Mishal
		"the managers realised that actually the quality team were there to help them not to do things to them" people come here they're in and out all the time (teaching hub) all seem to engage now	Staff Culture (change)	Rosie, Brian, Claire, John, Colin
	Observation team	VP TLA	Centralised CPD (grading accuracy)	Rob, Rosie, Brian, Ana, Claudio, David, Joel, Michele, Zac, Claire, John, Colin, Sarah, Mishal

	Observers	Quality Improvement Manager Head of Quality Advanced practitioners Critical friend – Ofsted inspectors should really be your best teachers not managers who haven't been in a classroom for 20 years or just go in once a year. So that's what we did	Colleagues (sameness) No hierarchy Internal Expertise (pool) Collaboration	John, Colin, Sarah, Mishal Rob, Rosie, Brian, Ana, Claudio, David, Joel, Michele, Zac, Claire Rob, Rosie, Brian, Ana, Claudio, David, Joel, Michele, Zac, Claire, John, Colin, Sarah, Mishal Rob, Rosie, Brian, Ana, Claudio, David, Joel, Michele, Zac, Claire, John, Colin, Sarah, Mishal Rosie, Brian
Continuing professional development	**Lesson observation**	Observed lessons Grading One per year More than one	Observation profile Judgment Critical friend/Ofsted Inspectors Benchmark All the teachers Continuous	Rob, Rosie, Brian, Ana, Claudio, David, Joel, Michele, Zac, Claire, John, Colin, Sarah, Mishal Rob, John, Colin, Sarah, Mishal

			Driver of CPD strategy	Rosie, Brian, Ana, Claudio, David, Joel, Michele, Zac, Claire
		Observed lessons Non-graded	feedback (written) professional conversation areas for improvement coaching one-to-one Driver of CPD strategy	Rob, Rosie, Brian, Ana, Claudio, David, Joel, Michele, Zac, Claire, John, Colin, Sarah, Mishal
		Professional practice visits Learning walks	every 6 weeks Managers' responsibilities Continuous improvement Areas for improvement Driver of CPD strategy	Rob Rosie, Brian, Ana, Claudio, David, Joel, Michele, Zac, Claire, John, Colin, Sarah, Mishal
		Excellence programme/ The journey to outstanding group	From 'good' to 'outstanding' Should lead to more outstanding lessons Only consistently 'good teachers'	Rob Rosie, Brian, Joel, Claire, John
	Training (in-house)	Staff learning development days (SLD in College)	5 throughout the year Compulsory Limited teachers' involvement	Rob, Rosie, Brian, Ana, Claudio, David, Joel, Michele, Zac, Claire, John, Colin, Sarah, Mishal
		Twilight training sessions	Compulsory throughout the year Formal expectation/monitor Shift towards more – but less SLD	Rosie, Brian, John, Mishal
	Training (external event)	Staff learning development days (SLD in own vocational industry)	Dual professional External CPD Compulsory (awarding body)	Rob, Rosie, Brian, Ana, Claudio, David, Joel, Michele, Zac, Claire, John, Colin, Sarah, Mishal
	Conference	Teaching conference	External CPD	Claire

	Formal qualifications	Teaching qualification Maths and English qualification (at least level 2 Assessor Microsoft certified Educator qualification (MCE)	Formal expectation/monitor Formal expectation/monitor	Rob, Rosie, Brian, Ana, Claudio, David, Joel, Michele, Zac, Claire, John, Colin, Sarah, Mishal Rob, Rosie, Brian, Ana, Claudio, David, Joel, Michele, Zac, Claire, John, Colin, Sarah, Mishal Rob, Rosie, Brian, Ana, Claudio, David, Joel, Michele, Zac, Claire, John, Colin, Sarah, Mishal Rob
	Staff appraisal	Performance review and development	Staff performance management One annually all the teachers development needs/individual plan Formal expectation/monitor	Rob, Rosie, Brian, Ana, Claudio, David, Joel, Michele, Zac, Claire, John, Colin, Sarah, Mishal
	Coaching	One to one shadowing (Observers)	to get them really sharp and know exactly what they were looking for Consistency within the team Coaching for compliance or taking risks and innovation	Rosie, Brian, Ana, John,
Benchmark	Common Inspection Framework	It would be foolish to ignore Ofsted We are a bit slavish when it comes to Ofsted		Rob, Rosie, Brian, Ana, Claudio, David, Joel, Michele, Zac, Claire, John, Colin, Sarah, Mishal

Funding	Staff development budget	We have a tiny budget I would love to have more money		Rob, Rosie, Brian, Ana, Claudio, David, Joel, Michele, Zac, Claire, John, Colin, Sarah, Mishal
External involvement	Collaboration/ partnerships	No not really we are so far away from everything. Have you seen where we are? We do attend some teaching conferences…I mean the AP do.		Rosie, Brian Rob, Claire

Appendix 5: Transcript (worked example)

Date of the interview: 5th December 17

Comments: The interview was originally planned for Monday 18th December which I declined because the interviewee wanted to discuss the matter over the phone. I thought it would be really difficult for me to record that conversation and it would also undermine my methodology. I explained the reasons for not wanting a telephone interview and another date was suggested which I accepted.

The interview went really well and the interviewee seemed to know a lot about the topic. I managed to keep calm during the interview and remained focused. I had plenty of time to cover all the interview questions. At times, I struggled a bit to understand some of the words the interviewee used due to his accent (not from the UK).

Interview transcription:

The first area I want us to go through is diagnosis

hun…hun...

Can you tell me a bit more about where the college was in terms of OFSTED grade before moving to grade 2?

Ok Hum…yeah. We merged in (deleted) with (deleted) so it was (deleted) at the time and (deleted) college was a separate organisation and hum….We merged just a the beginning (deleted) actually hum…so at that point hum…the college was…hum…(deleted) was sitting at grade 2 and (deleted) as a college was sitting at grade 3 hum…and then over a period of hum...that first year we came together as an organisation and…hum…six months apart there was **a full restructure** really of how we managed the organisation and…hum…that led to quite a lot of impact really I suppose you would say on lots of things within the college as well as teaching, learning and hum… assessment and hum…**the focus really being on reorganisation rather than quality**…what's going on…and **we had quite a big dip in quality within that year** and we were then inspected at the end of that year and the next year after and the college was **grade 3 overall** and in fact had fight for that because it was in trouble (laughs)…lots of outcomes and things so from that point onwards we were in a quite bad position and had to do a lot…hum… so at that point hum…we …you know…**you do your self-assessment of the organisation** and hum…you look at all of the issues that are within there and hum…(?) **set a quality improvement plan** to improve those, **set quite clear targets** and things for that improvement over time as well and hum...in 2014 we were re-inspected and came out very strong ultimately hum… grade 1 for Leadership and Management and twos

across the board with some very strong areas as well. hum… yes I suppose in a nutshell that was…what we went through.

Ok hum…how was CPD diagnosed?

Yes so what the issues were and what we needed to do?

Yeah so within that **self-assessment** we used the **Common Inspection Framework** called the CIF as you know and we hum… **observed lessons** so hum…**we grade** hum…we have a **graded lesson observation policy** in the college which every year we **annually grade all of the teachers** so hum…a lesson just **one gets graded** hum...within that policy around about November each year and we use the **areas for improvement within those grades** that we then use to create a **training plan** if you like for **both individual people and also college wide** hum…you know hum…pulling together all of the key themes of that **lesson observation scheme** hum…so that's how we were doing at that stage and we also do on top of that …that **graded and judgment** hum…you know …which is **moderated and validated pretty heavily that process of lesson observation**…hum…on top of that we have a thing called **PPVs** which stands for Professional Practice Visits and **every 6 weeks** we go into the classrooms hum… the manager goes to the classrooms and **observes** what's going on and gives **feedback**…**written feedback** just **on the areas to improve** and the things that didn't go well and any issues that came out. So in that **6 week cycle** there is a **continuous improvement plan** for the individuals but there are not graded so hum…there are just about **development** and having a **professional conversation** with your manager and about your **professional practice** and that is the whole idea really…so it's **constant improvement**. If there is something really significant that could trigger an observation…hum…a graded observation …something really poor …but ultimately they are about **development and improvement** rather than grading so that's the process we use through the year. Like I said (one way is?) the observation and a balance of professional practice visits and that sits out if you like the diagnosis ...hum… so that identifies the areas to improve both in an individual and hum…cross college level for themes. From there, we have an appraisal system and we actually called it the PRD or **Performance review** and **development** . It is really a performance management system...hum it is not a really an appraisal system at all. Appraisal systems tend to be fairly hum...they are not so heavily hum…they can be …various scales really of how appraisals are done but certainly at this college it is a **performance management tool**. Hum…so setting clear unambiguous targets for individuals hum…at the beginning of the year hum…meeting once in the middle of the year to assess how they gone against these targets and at the end giving them the outcome of whether they have achieved or not so it is very performance management based. Within that there is also a plan for the individual training so whatever comes out of that observation or through the year… they very specifically identified maybe

courses for them to go on or very specific areas for them to improve as far as their own personal CPD. So that sets for the individual level as well.

For the college…hum...cross college we have roughly **5 CPD days which are SLD days or staff learning development days** and they are on the calendar so we pluck them out through the year …they are scattered through the year (…) they are full days where we have a **set programme** and we run **a menu** basically and within the menu we have **compulsory training** and we also **training that people can opt for** …or select themselves so there is basically a full menu of courses on their day of training… programmes hum…probably 10 or 12 different things on the day and all of the staff come to the centre and they can select the ones they want to go to…**they can be directed to** hum… if they need to improve in certain areas and like I said they can be mandatory for certain things like health and safety or very specific parts of the training like prevent or hum…(that kind of) you know categories of training so that's how we sort of run the cross college days and where people get a menu so that they can attend the sessions they want to so that's part of the process…

Ok was there an emphasis on getting a TEACHING QUALIFICATION?

Yeah..hum… so we monitor pretty heavily hum…we expect…it is in our staff contract for all staff to have a **teaching qualification** they need to achieve within the first three years if they don't already have one so it is in the contract hum… obviously we **deliver those qualifications** here so they need to attend the qualifications here and achieve them here but that's …hum… we get them **some payment towards doing that as well** to help cover the cost because they have paid for themselves so there is a contribution towards some of the costs as well of that so that's an expectation. We also **monitor whether they have maths and English qualifications** as well we want to make sure that **everybody is at least level 2 in maths and English** so we work on that as well to make sure the skills are at the right levels so that they contribute fully to the learners' maths and English so we make sure we monitor that they are at level 2 and if they aren't we request them until they reach a level 2 qualification in Maths and English so there is those as well. Also in the last couple of years we have introduced hum… we have done a sort of base line assessment or if you like a diagnosis to see what our **e-learning skills** are of the staff so the basic **E** skills which you need and they need good teaching and learning hum…is expected that e-learning is a major factor whether it is to the tracking and monitoring information that is displayed to the learners whether it is their VLE where they access information or whether it's hum… within the classroom itself you know there is a big expectation on teachers having significant e-skills hum… digital skills so we did a **base line assessment** some years ago to see what are teachers and staff where their baseline were really against **a big survey** really and we were a bit shocked how low they were hum…generally so you know. And certainly a move away from CPD being all about the e-learning skills we put

forward hum… generally used to be all about new initiatives and new interesting advanced skills where actually there is a **big recognition it was back to basics in lots of cases.** Too many staff were well **below the ability** to do what we were expected let alone do the more advanced skills so we haven't always hum… done ever since put a lot more baseline skills into CPD days we do as far as basic things you would expect people to have but actually many don't. So hum… that's being quite a big factor in digital. We also put in **a new qualification in digital** for staff to hum… with the expectation that all teachers will achieve hum…. **The MCE which is the Microsoft certified Educator qualification** which is again a baseline qualification in digital skills hum… so that is the expectation that we've put to all staff and we've tracking that through as well. We are about 50 or 60 that have completed that hum…just very high really ultimately for the sector having a digital skill qualification

50 or 60 staff out of how many?

Out of about 250 so we are climbing.

Is that embedded in their annual staff appraisal?

Yeah it is an **expectation** that we put into the **quality improvement plan for the college** I think everybody has started the qualification because it is an online qualification ultimately that Microsoft produce and to get the qualification at the end you have to pass the test so like I said we have had about 50 or 60 passed the test now hum… we said we would do 10% of the college in year 1 and by now we have 20% through hum… we've gone passed that now so we are just growing over time so that everybody has got that qualification.

There seems to be a strategy at the individual lecturer's level and also at the institution's level.

(PPVIs, PRD and quality plan)

Yeah absolutely and **all schools themselves have their own quality improvement plan and their own strategy for their own teaching and learning** but we have **a cross college strategy** for teaching learning improvement that's right across the college. And that the **overall SLD days**, the themes and the emphasis on the themes we want to improve and **everybody skill not just individualised** yes you've got to have that because everybody is so different in their abilities. FE is different to schools because you know **90% or almost all our teachers come from a vocational background** so **they are not teachers they are not trained teachers**. They did not start at the university to become a trained teacher and go their route they are **trade person first teachers second** that's ultimately what they are so in order to grow their skills you know…a bricklayer commonly doesn't have much digital skills when they come to

the sector hum…that's not something you get overnight you know… so there is a transition that occurs over probably 5 years where they grow those skills. They would be 1 finger typing when they come euh…you know and the expectation is very high for what level they've got to go and achieve so euh…everybody is in a different place in their journey really in terms of the skills they are acquiring and acquired by the time you know you get to them. You can still be a good teacher hum… six weeks after joining the sector straight from vocational with the right skills and the right input but you won't be able to do a lot of the other administrative side of teaching and the expectations because you won't simply have those skills so it does take quite a lot of time to build that big package for a trained teacher euh… it's an apprenticeship all the time isn't I think it is about 4 years really to take somebody from starting point transitioning into having all of the skills hum…

It seems that you are touching on the concept of DUAL IDENTITY which I have come across in the literature and it is not always easy for the lecturers in FE to be able to reconcile the idea that they are teachers as well as coming from a specific trade.

It is such an important factor for us in this college we are a vocational college we don't do A levels so you know everything is about leading to work so it's all about the skills they have that they bring to teach the people so they can onto jobs so that's what is all about. So we are putting euh… we have a **staff training development policy** which says that **all teachers have to do 5 days of CPD in their own sector every year** as well as **another 5 of general SLD** that we promote around teaching learning and other things. So that a strategy we put in about 3 years ago to make sure that people were maintaining their skills level for their expertise in their field you know … for too long OFSTED focused on teaching, learning and assessment and the knowledge of the individual and the quality of what they are passing on was secondary which is really poor to be honest. Putting in an observer into a classroom who had no idea about the subject leads to that doesn't it? You know…if they don't have any subject knowledge and they might be good observer and they can see good teaching when they come across that but they have absolutely no idea whether the level and the quality of what's going on are correct and that's a big fail I think in the OFSTED system really and that's lead to FE concentrating far more on pedagogy than the knowledge and skills that are being developed by students hum…. Of course employers are saying there is a big disconnect between what students are getting in the classroom and what they are expecting them to have when they get to the workplace it's part of that you know. They try to turn us into schools you know … there is a big failure in the Ofsted system …

Do you have a benchmark that you are trying to achieve or to exceed?

For teaching and learning?

Yes how do you know that the targets when you for example design your training policy you must have a number of targets so what are you taking into consideration to adjust, align your targets to hum…

Yeah, we have hum…**the college strategy is to maintain 90% good or better for teaching observation profile** so that is the **starting point** to say that is what we need to be. The amount of outstanding teaching we need needs to be high so we've concentrating euh… in the last inspection they said in order to **be outstanding** you need to have more outstanding teaching that's what the report basically said. So we concentrating very heavily since then on improving the amount of outstanding teaching that was normally and often and more often outstanding. So we've gone from around from 20% or less to some 45% now euh… 40% outstanding teaching and learning so not only it is good or better the 90% but the proportion therefore of that that's outstanding is much higher too so that's been a big focus of ultimately that gives you your benchmark and your baseline. You want to make sure that you know euh… when we are grading the **grading is accurate** and that's really important because if you are over inflating your grades you are only fooling yourself really and when OFSTED or anybody else looks they will say actually your benchmarks are off. So **moderation** is really important in that process and we are making sure we are bringing **external OFSTED inspectors** so they moderate what we are doing euh… do **joint lesson observation**, check our grading to make sure that it is accurate so we've done **a lot of work on accuracy of grading** to make sure that is accurate.

So that's how we **set our benchmarks**. Like I said … out of the **areas for improvement** then **leads to what the development needs** are for the organisation because that drives everything really that profile and that **observation profile is the key driver** and the **measures we use**.

Do you feel constrained by the expectations that OFSTED brings into the equation or do you have a lot of autonomy in terms of innovation, or in terms of taking risks?

I mean **you do have as much as autonomy as you want** there is no issue … but certainly like I said I mentioned sort of earlier OFSTED's process and obsession with pedagogy does drive this sort of unusual behaviours and they are not always positive it does lead you down the line of euh… it been far more important of what the teachers' teaching skills are then the acknowledge of the sector. It is very easy to fall into that trap and I have seen many times where somebody in construction is deemed to be …were a very good teacher and yet they've got very few or little qualifications in construction. How can they possibly be teaching students in construction? It just does not work. So what I have seen and certainly where I come from in (deleted) teachers that teaching vocational qualifications they are the top of their sector they get paid well, they get paid about a third more by going and transitioning into teaching. The

rates of pay are much higher equivalent to sort about to 65000 pounds here which typically teachers earn about 35000 to 40000 max. So the rates are much higher so you attract the best from the sector, there is no OFSTED and there is no measure of pedagogy in that way so therefore there is no obsession on that it is about the skills and the knowledge the individual brings but also making sure they have the teaching skills so it is a very different approach. And that leads you to the highest and most skilled people in the sector going in and delivering. They may not have the best pedagogy skills but actually the important thing is what they bring to these students so that they are employable and gain the skills for employment rather than a total obsession on whether it is good enough active learning or not. Does that make sense? The is far too far over against just pedagogic skills at the moment that's the way I see it.

How are ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES organised in terms of CPD?

We have a structure ultimately it's me the VP curriculum and leaner experience it's my role. I run the college I run all of the operations and make sure everything that the students are facing is of good quality is my role. Within that of course the teachers and the quality of the teachers and therefore the CPD and all the things that go into that. So ultimately it's one person who's the key accountable and responsible for all of that. So that's how it works really. **One line of accountability** underneath me I have a head of Teaching and Learning and his responsibility is teaching across the college and developing that. And he has responsibility for maintaining SLD days and the training and development we have as a college. I have to write the quality improvement plan for the college, I have to write the self-assessment report for the college so that's ultimately sort of that line if you like. As far as in the schools, so below I have Directors, curriculum directors and they have direct responsibility for their schools and of course each of these schools have teachers and their own quality improvement plans, they have their own appraisals and their own targets they are trying to meet. So ultimately the accountability line for what's going on that classroom is directly through the curriculum area.

In terms of RESOURCES have you allocated a specific budget to staff development?

Yeah we do. We do have a **staff development budget** it's very **small** hum… we used to have a lot more. They used to be people like staff development managers and all sorts of things hum… did they add any value? I would argue no actually because they are too far removed from the curriculum and from the reality of what needs to be improve. I don't think they add value they just add costs. They create more euh…work for themselves and for others. So taking that out and dropping all of those roles and all those people out has actually added value I think. Ultimately, it's quite interesting isn't. You think oh gosh it's all cut out and it's now terrible. Well we have our SLD days and it works on menu. It is very easy. We set the course

or the programme we are going to run we put the trainers into rooms we do a schedule it's not particularly completed is it? It sounds you can do it in a relatively short amount of time so we then ask people to choose what they want to go to and when the room is full they close the door and they start. It's first arrived first served you know… so we are able to then with a **minimum amount of planning** run brilliant SLD days whereas in the past we would have had staff Learning and Development Manager who decided to book everybody in and decided who was going to what and created a huge difficulty around it and wasn't more effective and I would say less actually. So a **huge amount of planning** probably weeks of planning to do that with hundreds of people involved whereas actually there is a very simple way of doing we would argue **far more effective**. So I don't think cuts in themselves have led to significant issues. Like I said we allocate certain days which is staff only SLD we put in the CPD that is required and have it occurred. So it's harder of course because we have less people and people have to do more things but we've made sure we are very efficient in the way we operate so euh...Therefore it's been even more effective the **head of teaching and learning** has been responsible for CPD therefore he has been able to **make sure that is in line with the needs and requirements of the college** rather than somebody else. I think it's been actually more successful interesting.

That was quite interesting because you touched on the BARRIERS AND THE SOLUTION as well as the duration.

Yeah

So in terms of EXTERNAL INVOLVEMENT have you worked with external bodies?

Oh yeah! We do bits whenever we can and work with others. So we got a bit we did most recently we've been doing the last 6 months which is the humm … teaching, learning and assessment through the ETF and humm… so money to do that one and we've been doing one which was something we really want to get stuck into and it was about putting skilled trade people into the classrooms which they would have never done before so we basically brought them in paid them gave a small half-day training session on the basics of pedagogy and then supported them with creating the material and put them in the classrooms. So ultimately we were giving people who would never been near a classroom before you know they were being paid to be there so they were being paid a reasonable rate it's about 500 a day or 250 for a half-day so they were coming in … we were just another job if you like to them so you were getting some of the top sector people which I sort of talk about earlier which you can't normally achieve because the rate of pay are too low in teaching therefore you could bring in some of these very specialist skills that students want to gain and inject them into the classroom if you like. So that was the project we did. We did a range of providers both private training

providers and other colleagues actually hum… through (deleted) as well as couple of the other private training providers we work with as well. We usually using bid money to do something that is very innovate and we are always for projects to do that and to advance and develop what we are doing.

As well as I think you mentioned OFSTED inspectors?

Yeah. We often bring you know we make sure that we have OFSTED inspectors in here every year actually that help us moderate and help us develop. We have a range of other programmes … we have a programme called the excellence programme which is all about staff who've been good euh ... on a good observation for a number of years to bring them up to outstanding so we've running that programme for a good three or four years now which has been very effective at lifting from good to outstanding for teachers. That's been the most significant tool we've used to lift from you know like I mentioned sort of rates of outstanding significantly higher that's the key contributing factor to that really. So that's individual coaching that programme because I didn't really mention coaching but that's quite a significant piece of that.

In terms of METHODS OF IMPROVEMENT or TOOLS (CPD) what do you use?

We don't use mentoring I think that is pretty ineffective really it's ok for bringing people in but ultimately no I think it's quite ineffective. So not something we use but definitely coaching one to one coaching. That coaching support is very effective at taking people who are very good and moving them to outstanding so helping them do that. The PPVs or the managers going in regularly and giving feedback and setting standards and identifying issues you call that coaching as well but it's by your line manager so that's not true coaching in effect because it's ultimately your line manager but it is the identification of areas for improvement. Like I said in the CPD activity that goes that is general training whether that is training in small groups, large groups whatever it might be some **even online**. I think there is a **large range of different methods of improvement** and of course depending on what is needed but certainly what is very clear if you want to get to outstanding the really the only that is effective is coaching support direct one-to-one coaching support that is the only thing that get people there and certainly not the group training. It's good and helpful and does but it won't get you to outstanding from our experience.

I want to focus on the measures what MEASURES are there to say we are doing the right things? Are we taking OFSTED grade which is a good outcome but what are the other quantitative measures that you use?

The feedback from the learners so our teaching observations process you know the surveys we have induction survey, teaching & learning survey (laughs!), final survey. We use a lot of

surveying of leaners take feedback from them and of course this college last year was top of England for student satisfaction so we are doing something right then and euh… get feedback from employers as well so that gives you the wider feedback loop. Hum… the teaching and learning observation process and that I mentioned with the grading process and that is the key one against Ofsted criteria hum… the other **TARGETS** we set around the achievement rates and pass rates so you know attendance within a class is another driver for students non attending and the reason why hum…maybe it is not very interesting so all of those key performance indicators attendance, retention, pass rates are all good indicators really that we set targets for and measure people on and hold them to account really.

In terms of SKILLS, BEHAVIOURS, ATTITUDE FROM PROFESSIONALS, LECTURERS ARE THERE ANY INDICATORS you are taking into account?

What do you mean? Like?

A lecturer who feels confident is more likely to perform well in a classroom

euh… ohh! Euh…yeah I suppose making sure that the environment is a good one and it is one that is about development and I think that whole process of having somebody coming and see you regularly your manager is part of that **PROCESS** of people feeling like they can advance, feeling like they are given feedback regularly so they know the areas that need to improve and they know they are doing well obviously people need to know when they are doing a good job so it is important to tell people that. The **PRD PROCESS** is only three meetings a year but again you get the feedback in that and it is an opportunity to show you are doing well. We do have things like staff awards, excellence ceremony and there are other ways people can get **RECOGNISE** within their peer group which I think it's quite helpful to that. But overall, certainly about the ethos about the organisation and about what we are expecting high standards but we are also you know in a culture way it is not a blame culture it is about **DEVELOPMENT** and giving people all the opportunities to improve but if they can't improve and won't improve we see them out quickly as well. So we don't let that sort of end up being a low moral issue or being with staff that are very unhappy that are spreading that sort of feedback through the organisation too.

How is your experience useful for the sector? What would you say the key points are that will need to be taken to be into account? What would be the lesson learnt?

That is an interesting question hum… what are the **LESSONS LEARNED**? Lots and lots of lessons I suppose…hum. Certainly I think one of the key things …like I said really you can't get somebody to outstanding without the individual coaching support I mean that is a fundamental one that we have learnt now that what works. Continuously throwing training at

people won't get you there it is only going to get so far I think that is quite critical. The personalisation that you need in order to advance people it's quite important that is there somewhere and the people can tap into it and use it I think it's quite critical rather than just CPD for the sake of it won't get you as far as I would it to ..I think that's quite a critical one we've learned over the years. Hum…what else…hum…I guess being equally being robust and having robust systems and policies so that you know and you follow them I sort of mention that idea that if you are not up to it then you get move on and too often I think you find in FE that process can take far too long and shouldn't ultimately. If somebody isn't to it be honest about it and have a conversation try to give him support but there is point where it is not support they need it is just not for them and make the decision quickly and move on ...euh… that is a really important…because they can cause a lot of problems within an organisation and many colleges have got pretty good at identifying issues and move through quickly.

I have identified a very strong relationship between the leadership and the outcome. There must be a drive coming through the leaders

That is very true

Unless that happens first

Yes yes

I don't think that you know we would be talking about successful

That is exactly true if you don't have clear targets, if you don't have clear strategies, if you don't have a clear drive for that yeah you know and the leaders … the **leaders have to drive the focus** don't they so yeah you di